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THE CHRISTIAN SPECTATOR *versus* JOHN WESLEY AND THE WITNESS OF THE SPIRIT.

BY N. BANGS, D. D.

THIS, our readers must know, is a Quarterly Review, published in New-Haven, Connecticut, under the supervision of New School Congregationalists. Not content with maintaining their own doctrinal peculiarities, for doing which they have an unquestionable right, they have manifested no little solicitude for Methodism, as though to them were committed the high responsibility of taking it under their special guardianship. Were it not for the rude manner in which they have on some occasions heretofore treated us, we might feel under no small obligation to the conductors of that work for the fraternal care they have at times exemplified in our behalf. As it is, however, we shall leave it to our readers to determine on which they have the greatest claim, our gratitude or our patience. Giving them all the credit they have a right to demand for the goodness of their *intentions*, we cannot yield to them the palm of superior *discernment* in espying those delicate lines of distinction which divide us from other Christian denominations.

As a proof of their warm solicitude for our welfare, we remark that, not many years since, they expressed no little self-satisfaction from the hope that Dr. Clarke would set us right on a mooted point of Christian doctrine, and that the influence of his example would tend to excite among us a love of science and literature. For these pious wishes, however much of reproach they may have implied, they will accept of our *gratitude*—and it would be unmixed, were we not constrained to accompany the remark with that significant *but*, which is so often used to mark the infirmities of our fellow beings.

But, then, in spite of all these good wishes for our welfare and respectability, they could not help mingling with their ardent aspirations, many reproachful epithets. Their pages, indeed, were rife with severe strictures upon Dr. Adam Clarke's Commentary, upon his Sermons, as well as upon the entire structure of Methodism; and their remarks were mingled with much sneering contempt and no little vituperative misrepresentation and flippant caricature. With an air of magisterial authority, as though they were authorized to deliver lectures on Methodism *ex cathedra*, not altogether becoming the meekness of *Christian gentlemen*, and with a partial regard to truth not perfectly in character with *candid spectators*,

they affirmed that "the doctrines of Wesleyan Methodism were miserably defective,"—that whatever is peculiar in its government and economy, is not only "confessedly without Scripture authority," but also "in open contempt of its testimony;" and that its ministry were guilty of descending to a speculating management to attain their objects. These heavy charges were a trial of our *patience*.

Coming, however, from the quarter they did, and reiterated through the medium of several other public vehicles of periodical literature, though of themselves so manifestly unfounded and ridiculous, they were considered by our friends to be worthy of notice; they were therefore met, their falsity exposed, the assertions and reasonings by which they were attempted to be supported, refuted and overthrown by an appeal to facts and arguments derived from sources of unquestionable authority. Here both our patience and gratitude were called into exercise—*patience* in wading through the mass of evidence requisite for the refutation of alleged facts, and managing the arguments necessary to overthrow their false reasonings—and *gratitude* to find ourselves sustained by so ample materials and by the impartial readers of our wearisome controversy.

From the termination of this bloodless warfare, the *Christian Spectator*, until quite recently, had observed a modest silence, so far as Methodist doctrines and usages are concerned. Whether its conductors became conscious that they had done us an act of injustice, and on that account refrained from a repetition of their offence, or whether they only rested for a season with a view to recruit their exhausted strength for future use, we determine not. Be this as it may, and we have no solicitude as to the fact or its results, in their number for September last they have renewed the combat in an article headed "JOHN WESLEY AND THE WITNESS OF THE SPIRIT." In comparison with their former numbers, this is mild and conciliating, though the writer could not, it seems, conclude his remarks without giving utterance to the following very offensive sentence:—"Hitherto, our Methodist brethren have shown a morbid sensitiveness whenever their favorite writers have been reviewed, or their favorite doctrines controverted. We would remind them, that, astonishing as it may seem in their eyes, we have no more confidence in their infallibility than we have in that of the pope."

Now we are not at all astonished at this want of confidence in our infallibility; but we are somewhat astonished that any writer should have given utterance to such a reproachful sentence, as though "the Methodist brethren" had in reality laid claim to "infallibility," and were so secure in the belief that the claim was yielded them by these Congregational reviewers, as to make it a matter of astonishment that it should be withheld. Whenever the time comes to make it expedient to set up for infallibility, we may apply for some lessons on the subject of human impeccability to those whose disagreements among themselves are of such notoriety and irksome perplexity, as to make it extremely desirable to have some infallible standard of truth by which their orthodoxy may be tested, and their disputes brought to a close.

But the "Methodist brethren manifest a morbid sensitiveness whenever their favorite writers are reviewed." This personal reflection comes with an ill grace from those whose sensitiveness is so

proverbial that merely on account of some metaphysical differences on particular points of what they call the "philosophy of the Gospel," new theological schools are established, conflicting reviews published, and even the censures of the Church inflicted on dissentient ministers. But how is this "morbid sensitiveness" displayed? Why, a Congregational reviewer sees fit to enter his protest against our doctrinal peculiarities, to denounce our Church authorities, to caricature our ecclesiastical economy, and to pour forth a stream of sarcastical declamation against our proceedings—and, what is worse than all, to accuse us of misleading the public mind, and even of imposing on our own people by keeping from them requisite information in regard to the financial concerns of the Church—and we have presumed to complain of these things, to refute their unfounded charges, and to appeal to the public for the correctness of our statements. For doing this in the most unexceptionable manner we could, instead of submitting to be thus loaded with reproach in silence, we are accused of "showing a morbid sensitiveness." It is not, however, a matter of astonishment, that they who have exhibited so much of this mental disease, in the instances above enumerated, should suspect their neighbors of *being actuated* by a similar infirmity.

Had we looked on with cold indifference, while these courteous reviewers were representing John Wesley as having been actuated by motives and designs similar to managing and intriguing demagogues, and by a love of power, which was manifested, as they *said*, in his arbitrary proceedings—and while they represented the entire superstructure of Methodism as being built upon an assumption of usurped authority, in contempt of Scripture testimony—had we done this in submissive silence, no doubt we might have escaped the censure of this writer, as being under the influence of a diseased mind. But we very much doubt whether these gentlemen would secretly have honored us under these circumstances, as servants faithful to our trust—faithful in defending that which had been committed to our keeping by our fathers. At any rate, *we* should have considered ourselves reckless of the characters of those whom we had been accustomed, from an intimate knowledge of their doctrines and conduct, to venerate, as among the most honest, wise, and industrious of our species.

We think, moreover, that our labors in this respect have not been altogether without effect, even on the minds of these Congregational reviewers. This we judge from the tone of the article under consideration. While from the character of former articles, which involved the doctrine and conduct of Mr. Wesley and Methodism, we had reason to believe that the writers never had read Mr. Wesley, nor acquainted themselves with the system they so vehemently condemned, we are bound to think that the present writer has both read and admired the character and general conduct of Wesley. This we judge from the altered tone in which he writes. He thinks the character of Wesley, though he admits that Watson and not Southey has given the most faithful portrait of him, is best seen and appreciated in his Journals. Of course he has read these Journals, as well as Southey's and Watson's life of that excellent man. It is these sources of information which have compelled him—if we may identify him with the former writer on "Wesleyan

Methodism" in the Christian Spectator—to exchange the bitterness of invective for an admission of the goodness and excellence of Mr. Wesley's character. Though he cannot withhold from his readers the palpable instance of his inconsistency in averring that these Journals exhibit "the true expression of Mr. Wesley's superstition and mysticism," at the same time that they record evidences "of his living piety, his holy life, his tireless labors to serve man, his sufferings from persecution, his unshaken steadfastness in his work, until he went 'up higher' to stand before the throne." That a *superstitious mystic*, sometimes "insane as well as sane," should have furnished evidence of so much contrariety of character, is no less extraordinary than it is that this writer should insinuate that his Methodist brethren had set up for infallibility. This admission, however, will afford some consolation to those who exhibit alternate marks of *insanity* and *sanity*, of *superstition* and *living piety*, that they may nevertheless at last stand acquitted before the holy throne above.

What follows, as a eulogium upon Mr. Wesley's character, is less exceptionable, more especially, as it seems to have been extorted from the writer as a reluctant homage to truth—truth derived, not from a perusal of Southey's contemptible narrative of one of the most holy, learned, laborious, and successful of God's servants, but from an inspection of his Journals. "Far be it," says this writer, "from us to speak of Mr. Wesley without suitable feelings of respect. He was a highly distinguished servant of God, whose glory no human efforts can tarnish; and if we could we would not pluck a leaf that laurels his brow. We regard him as a luminary of uncommon brightness, whose shining gladdened the Church, and whose splendor still lingers upon its path. His name is enrolled with those worthies whose destiny is to shine for ever in the kingdom of heaven with the brightness of the firmament." This homage to the excellence of John Wesley's character, be it remembered, was extorted from one who had read his Journals, and who had just now given us a labored *jejune* exposition of *mysticism* as exemplified by this self-same John Wesley, and whom he had, almost in the same breath, pronounced sometimes *insane as well as sane*, and which same Journals "contain a record of his superstitions and mysticism." We may therefore conclude that a "highly distinguished servant of God, whose glory no human efforts can tarnish,"—(of this these reviewers have doubtless become convinced by former experiments) and "a luminary of uncommon brightness," may nevertheless be under the influence of a *superstitious mysticism*, and sometimes, at least, exhibit evidences of *insanity*—and even, if the Calvinistic doctrine respecting the necessary continuance of indwelling sin be true, may "sin every moment, in thought, word, and deed." Such inconsistencies may indeed meet in the same character, according to the doctrine of this review, and therefore, though they may deserve rebuke, need not excite astonishment.

Nor should we demur at the following exceptions to the character of Mr. Wesley, did they not proceed from the same pen which had before recorded the lines we have quoted: "But while we eulogize, we cannot be insensible to the fact, that this luminary was not perfectly unclouded. There were spots upon it. which enthusiastic

admiration may easily overlook, but which the unjaundiced eye of a Christian spectator may detect and expose without the least diminution of merited respect." As this writer seems to allow that a "luminary of uncommon brightness" may "not be perfectly unclouded," we hope he will excuse us from supposing that he himself, notwithstanding his claim to be a "Christian spectator of unjaundiced eye,"—not much removed from the claim of "infallibility"—may sometimes wander under the clouds of error, and lose himself in those mystical reveries which distinguish "enthusiastic admirers" of a false philosophy, and of a falser theory of divinity.

This we shall now proceed to test—for it is time that we come to the chief object of the present article, namely, to examine the criticisms of this writer on Mr. Wesley's doctrine of the *witness of the Spirit*.

As the foundation of his remarks upon this deep and vital subject of Christian experience, the reviewer quotes the following sentence from Mr. Wesley's sermon on the Witness of the Spirit.

"The testimony of the Spirit is an inward impression on the soul, whereby the Spirit of God directly witnesses to my spirit that I am a child of God; that Jesus hath loved me and given himself for me, and that all my sins are blotted out, and that I, even I, am reconciled to God."

This the reviewer condemns as an evidence of Mr. Wesley's mysticism. He not only faults the language in which it is expressed, but denies the doctrine as unscriptural and irrational. Before we proceed to examine the objections which the writer prefers against this doctrine, we will, in the first place, state Mr. Wesley's views at large, so that there need be no misunderstanding of what they were. Mr. Wesley has two sermons on this subject, the one on the Witness of our own Spirit, and the other on the Witness of God's Spirit; both of which witnesses testify to the same fact, namely, that we are the children of God. In the first of these sermons is found the sentence above quoted by the reviewer, and commented upon in terms of severe reprehension. In the second he says, "After twenty years' consideration, I see no cause to retract any part of this. Neither do I conceive how any of these expressions may be altered, so as to make them more intelligible. I can only add, that if any of the children of God will point out any other expressions, which are more clear or more agreeable to the word of God, I will readily lay these aside." Do these modest words sound like the confident boastings of a self-conceited mystic, bewildered in the mists of his own imaginary wisdom and greatness? We may have an opportunity of contrasting this becoming deference to the judgment of others with some of the dogmatical assertions of this self-confident reviewer.

But Mr. Wesley, who perhaps was one of the most cautious writers of the age in which he lived, to prevent any misapprehension on this deeply interesting and important subject, adds the following:—

"Meantime let it be observed, I do not mean hereby, that the Spirit of God testifies this by any outward voice; no, nor always by an inward voice, although he may do this sometimes. Neither do I suppose, that he always applies to the heart (though he often

may) one or more texts of Scripture. But he so works upon the soul by his immediate influence, and by a strong though inexplicable operation, that the stormy wind and troubled waves subside, and there is a sweet calm; the heart resting as in the arms of Jesus, and the sinner being clearly satisfied that God is reconciled, that 'all his iniquities are forgiven, and his sins covered.'" And after answering a variety of objections to this doctrine, most of which are much stronger than any brought by this reviewer, and therefore, if he had duly weighed them, he might have saved himself the trouble of stating, and us the labor of canvassing his own objections, Mr. Wesley sums up the whole argument thus:—

"The sum of all is this: the testimony of the Spirit is an inward impression on the souls of believers, whereby the Spirit of God directly testifies to their spirit, that they are children of God. And it is not questioned, whether there is a testimony of the Spirit; but whether there is any *direct* testimony? Whether there is any other than that which arises from a consciousness of the fruit of the Spirit? We believe there is; because this is the plain natural meaning of the text," (namely, *The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God.*) "illustrated both by the preceding words, and by the parallel passage in the epistle to the Galatians; because, in the nature of the thing, the testimony must precede the fruit which springs from it; and because this plain meaning of the word of God is confirmed by the experience of innumerable children of God; yea, and by the experience of all who are convinced of sin, who can never rest till they have a direct witness; and even of the children of the world, who, not having the witness in themselves, one and all declare none can *know* his sins forgiven."

This then is the doctrine of Mr. Wesley, concerning the witness of God's Spirit, so plainly laid down, that no one who is not wilfully blind, need misapprehend him. He believed and taught constantly, on the authority of the word of God, that it is the privilege of every believer in Jesus Christ to have a direct witness from God that his sins are blotted out, and that he is "reconciled to God through the death of his Son." But he believed also, that it was possible for a person to be deceived on this point of Christian experience; to imagine he has this direct witness when he has it not; though he allowed at the same time that it is possible to have an *assurance* of the Spirit of adoption—such an assurance as to exclude all rational doubt. To prevent any one from deceiving himself on a subject of such vital importance to his eternal interests, Mr. Wesley furnishes his readers with those Scriptural marks and rational deductions, by which he may detect the deception, and fully satisfy himself whether he be in the favor of God or not. This he calls the *testimony of our own spirit*, which, in an experimental Christian, bears a *joint* testimony with the Spirit of God, that he is "an heir of God and a joint heir with Jesus Christ." These marks are laid down in the first of the above-mentioned sermons, in which he speaks of the testimony of our own spirit, in bearing witness to the same consoling truth, that we are the children of God. After having explained the meaning of this declaration, he says:—

"Agreeable to this are all those plain declarations of St. John, in

his first epistle: 'Hereby we know that we do know him, if we keep his commandments,' ch. ii, 3. 'Whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected; hereby know we that we are in him,' ver. 5. 'We know that we are passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren,' ch. iii, 14. 'Hereby we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before him,' ver. 19; namely, because we 'love one another, not in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth.' 'Hereby we know that we dwell in him, because he hath given us of his [loving] Spirit,' ch. iv, 13. 'And hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the [obedient] spirit which he hath given us,' ch. iii, 24.

It is highly probable, there never were any children of God, from the beginning of the world unto this day, who were farther advanced in the grace of God, and the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ, than the Apostle John, when he wrote these words, and the fathers in Christ to whom he wrote. Notwithstanding which, it is evident, both the apostle himself, and all those pillars in God's temple, were very far from despising these marks of their being the children of God; and that they applied them to their own souls for the confirmation of their faith. Yet all this is no other than rational evidence, the witness of our spirit, our reason or understanding. It all resolves into this:—Those who have these marks are the children of God: but we have these marks: therefore we are children of God.

But how does it appear that we have these marks? This is a question which still remains. How does it appear that we do love God and our neighbor, and that we keep his commandments? Observe, the question is, How does it appear to *ourselves*? (not to *others*.) I would ask him, then, that proposes this question, How does it appear to you that you are alive? Are you not immediately conscious of it? By the same immediate consciousness, you will know if your soul is alive to God; if you are saved from the pain of proud wrath, and have the ease of a meek and quiet spirit. By the same means you cannot but perceive if you love, rejoice, and delight in God. By the same you must be directly assured, if you love your neighbor as yourself; if you are kindly affectioned to all mankind, and full of gentleness and long suffering. And with regard to the outward mark of the children of God, which is, according to St. John, the keeping his commandments, you undoubtedly know in your own breast, if, by the grace of God, it belongs to you. Your conscience informs you, from day to day, if you do not take the name of God within your lips, unless with seriousness and devotion, with reverence and godly fear; if you remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy; if you honor your father and mother; if you do to all as you would they should do unto you; if you possess your body in sanctification and honor; and if, whether you eat or drink, you are temperate therein, and do all to the glory of God.

Now this is properly the testimony of our own spirit; even the testimony of our own conscience, that God hath given us to be holy of heart, and holy in outward conversation. It is a consciousness of our having received, in and by the Spirit of adoption, the tempers mentioned in the word of God, as belonging to his adopted children;

even a loving heart toward God, and toward all mankind; hanging with child-like confidence on God our Father, desiring nothing but him, casting all our care upon him, and embracing every child of man with earnest, tender affection; so as to be ready to lay down our life for our brother, as Christ laid down his life for us:—a consciousness, that we are inwardly conformed, by the Spirit of God, to the image of his Son, and that we walk before him in justice, mercy, and truth, doing the things which are pleasing in his sight.”

This is what Mr. Wesley means by the testimony of our spirit, or the rational conviction of our understanding that we are the children of God, though he by no means excludes that joint testimony of our spirit to the inward and strong witness of God's Spirit, which immediately and simultaneously accompanies the communication of the direct attestation of the fact to the heart of the penitent believer, that he is now adopted into the family of God. For thus he speaks in reference to this witness, as being antecedent in the order of nature, to those fruits which he had before enumerated:—

“Not that I would by any means be understood, by any thing which has been spoken concerning it, to exclude the operation of the Spirit of God, even from the testimony of our own spirit. In no wise. It is he that not only worketh in us every manner of thing that is good, but also shines upon his own work, and clearly shows what he has wrought. Accordingly this is spoken of by St. Paul, as one great end of our receiving the Spirit, ‘That we may know the things which are freely given to us of God:’ that he may strengthen the testimony of our conscience touching our ‘simplicity and godly sincerity;’ and give us to discern, in a fuller and stronger light, that we now do the things which please him.”

From this view of the subject, Mr. Wesley thinks that the true believer in Jesus Christ can come to a logical conclusion in favor of his sonship. Thus he sums up the whole:—

“The soul as intimately and evidently perceives when it loves, delights, and rejoices in God, as when it loves and delights in any thing on earth. And it can no more doubt, whether it loves, delights, and rejoices or no, than whether it exists or no. If therefore this be just reasoning,

He that now loves God, that delights and rejoices in him with an humble joy, and holy delight, and an obedient love, is a child of God:

But I thus love, delight, and rejoice in God;

Therefore I am a child of God:—

Then a Christian can in nowise doubt of his being a child of God. Of the former proposition he has as full an assurance as he has that the Scriptures are of God; and of his thus loving God, he has an inward proof, which is nothing short of self-evidence. Thus, the testimony of our own spirit is with the most intimate conviction manifested to our hearts, in such a manner, as beyond all reasonable doubt to evince the reality of our sonship.”*

* It appears to us to be capable of moral demonstration, that as in the order of nature, the testimony of God's Spirit is anterior to the appearance of its fruits, so our own spirit, that is, our rational soul, must also receive and recognize that Divine testimony *before* we can perceive the existence of its fruits.

From these ample quotations it is manifest that Mr. Wesley held to the three following propositions:—

1. That God does directly give by his Holy Spirit to the penitent believer an evidence of his adoption.

2. That this penitent believer receives and recognizes this evidence by his own spirit, by which he knows that he is a child of God, anterior to those outward marks called the "keeping the commandments of God."

3. That in order to detect any delusion upon this subject, we must examine our hearts and lives. If we bring forth the "fruits of the Spirit," such as "love, peace, joy, faith, long-suffering, meekness, goodness, gentleness, and temperance," and are holy in all manner of conversation, keeping the commandments of God from a loving and obedient heart, all which he includes in the testimony of our own spirit, then we are authorized to believe that our experience is genuine: but if, on the other hand, a man thinks he has received the Spirit of adoption, and still finds evil tempers, hatred, wrath, and bitterness rankling in his heart, pride and vain glory actuating his soul, and an indifference to the commandments of God, he ought to conclude that he has deceived his own soul.

If the Divine testimony to a matter of fact be given to an individual, it can be no testimony to him unless he perceive and understand it; there must be a recipient intelligent being in order to receive and understand an intelligible communication; and after this communication or witness is received and recognized as the testimony of God, the same mind which received it will bear witness to the fruits which follow.

We say with Mr. Wesley, that the witness of God's Spirit must, in the very nature of things, precede the existence of its fruits; and though in respect to *time*, our own spirit recognizes this witness simultaneously with its being given, yet in the *order of nature* the testimony of the Divine Spirit must be antecedent to its direct recognition by our spirit. This is manifest from the inseparable connection between *cause* and *effect*, and of the dependence of the latter upon the former for its existence. The sun is the *cause* of light and heat in the natural world. And as the sun must exist and act on the earth *before* light and heat are produced, so must the Holy Spirit operate upon the heart antecedently to its recognition by our spirit; and this recognition must also, in the order of nature, *precede* the existence of its fruits, just as certainly as a *cause* must *precede* the *effects* which it produces.

To assert the contrary would be no less absurd than it would be to say that there may be a stream of water without any fountain whence it proceeds, or that we can see that stream before we have any eyes to see it with. Those, therefore, who assert that we may have the fruits of the Spirit without the presence and agency of the Spirit himself to produce them, are equally inconsistent with those who should affirm that there can be water where there is no fountain, or light and heat without the instrumentality of the sun.

Our Saviour has said, "Make the tree good, and the fruit will be good also,"—by which he unquestionably meant to say, the heart of the sinner must be made good by the grace of his Spirit, before his life can be holy. And who in his sober senses will undertake to controvert this plain dictate of common sense? Well, if the heart be made good by the *Spirit of holiness prior* to its bringing forth holy fruits, must not the person on whom this great moral change is wrought be *conscious* of it *before* the fruit itself is perceived? The recipient of this great spiritual blessing must be conscious of its reception, by the direct operation of that *Spirit of truth* which brings its own witness to the heart, otherwise it is no witness to him, and might therefore as well, as to all the benefits he derives from it, be given to a stock or a stone. Why should God speak to a being who is not capable of hearing and understanding his voice? Why bear witness to a fact, of which the person for whose benefit alone the fact is announced, is entirely ignorant?

Why then, it may be asked, do we appeal to the fruits at all? The answer is,

To this doctrine, but more especially that contained in the first proposition, the reviewer objects, calling it Mr. Wesley's "*mysticism*," and an evidence of his "*superstition*" and occasional "*insanity*." This being the case, it shall be our endeavor to support the doctrine,

2. From the explicit declarations of God's word,—by which it will appear that it has been the experience of God's people in every period of the Church, under both the Old and New Testament dispensations. St. Paul says of Abel, who was the first martyr to truth and righteousness, "He obtained *WITNESS* that he was righteous, God *TESTIFYING* of his gifts." Of Enoch, also, who walked with God three hundred years in all holy conversation, the same apostle testifies, "Before his translation, he had this *TESTIMONY*, that he pleased God," Heb. xi, 4, 5. This *witness* and *testimony* must have been either by an audible voice, or by some symbolical representation, such as the manifestation of the Divine presence in the *Shechinah*, or by the *direct witness of the Spirit of God* from heaven to their hearts, that their works were righteous and their offerings accepted. But whatever might have been the medium through which the communication was made, it must have been a satisfactory evidence to them, and that, according to the language of the apostle above quoted, from God himself, bringing an infallible certainty that their works and offerings were acceptable in his sight.

And what shall we say of Job, the perfect man, who feared God and eschewed evil? Though surrounded with the waves of affliction, which beat upon him one after another, in such quick succession, as to threaten to drown him beneath their overwhelming surges, yet he held on to the anchor of hope, which was founded on an inward and inspiring consciousness of the Divine approbation. Hence, in

a person may be deceived—he may *think* he has the Spirit, when he has it not—and to prevent deception of this sort, he must seek for those fruits which always and infallibly flow from the witness of God's Spirit—and if he find them not, he should conclude that he has deceived himself. The *test*, therefore, is to detect deception in those who are not otherwise certain that they are in the favor of God.

"But if they are already certain, what need of the *test*?" And suppose we should allow that there is no need of the *test*, in order to satisfy ourselves of the fact, it would not follow that the fruits are not there, but directly the reverse. If there be an inseparable connection between cause and effect, and if the Holy Spirit, operating upon the heart of a believer, be the cause of those fruits, then, whether they be necessary or not to test the genuineness of the witness, they must exist and flourish. But, will the objector tell us why it is that God requires that "in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word should be established?"

Because the first witness tells the truth, does it follow that the testimony of the second is needless? How often is a second and even a third witness brought to corroborate the testimony of the first? And shall we here interpose our philosophy, and say that because we are satisfied that the first has told the truth, the second is unnecessary? The fact is, God is determined not to leave himself without a witness, strong and indubitable, of his work on the sinner's heart, that he may be entirely inexcusable, if he allows himself to be deceived by the illusions of error. Hence he has established, it seems, this order, this inseparable connection between cause and effect, that the one shall bear witness to the existence of the other, so that the absence of the one declares the absence of the other, and *vice versa*. Thus the fruits of the Spirit bear witness to the presence of the Spirit himself, while this latter speaks in his own authoritative language to the heart, and bids the "light to shine out of darkness," and it is done. In the mouth of these two witnesses every word respecting the sinner's adoption into the family of God is established.

the midst of the storm, he cries out in these triumphant words,—“Also now my **WITNESS** is in heaven, and my **RECORD** on high,” ch. xvi, 19. This surely could have been none other than the *witness of the Spirit* for which we contend; for Job had no Scriptures to guide him, no such symbol of the Divine presence as that to which the faithful Hebrews were wont to look, and no other instructor than the heavens over his head, and the earth beneath his feet, and that faithful monitor and Divine Teacher, the *Holy Spirit*, which is alike accessible to all pious people in every age and nation under heaven, and to which Job himself alludes when he says, “There is a spirit in man, and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding.” What other *witness* than that same Almighty Spirit, which “garnisheth the heavens,” and “giveth wisdom to the simple,” to the honest hearted, could have inspired Job with that holy confidence which enabled him to say to his mistaken friends, “I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth?” ch. xix, 25. This was the Lord’s “candle” which “shined upon his head,” by whose “light he walked in darkness,” when, “in the days of his youth, the secret of God was upon his tabernacle,” ch. xxix, 3, 4.

Isaiah bears testimony to the same important truth in those memorable words in the sixth chapter of his inimitable prophecy. After having said, from a consciousness of his sinfulness, “Wo is me! for I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips,” he adds, “Then flew one of the seraphim unto me, having a live coal in his hand”—“and he laid it upon my mouth, and said, Lo, this hath touched thy lips, and thine iniquity is taken away and thy sin purged.” Now how could he know that his iniquity was taken away and his sin purged, but by that same Almighty Spirit which is promised to those who “turn at his reproof?” Prov. i, 23. No man, it is presumed, will pretend to say that Isaiah is to be understood literally, when he says, this was done by one of the cherubim; but only that these cherubim were an emblematical representation of the “seven Spirits of God before the throne,” or that eternal Spirit, whose office it is to impart various gifts to his believing people, and, among others, the gift of pardon and salvation to all who believe in Jesus Christ “with a heart unto righteousness.”

But, though this witness of their acceptance in the sight of God was the privileged enjoyment of the saints of God, under the Old Testament dispensation,—the nature of true religion being the same under every dispensation,—yet the promises of this unspeakable blessing are more plentifully found in the New Testament. The general promise made unto all true believers is undoubtedly contained in those celebrated words of our Saviour, which he uttered upon the last day of the feast of tabernacles, as recorded in John vii, 37, 38, 39, “Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink. He that believeth on me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. (But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive; for the Holy Ghost was not yet given, because that Jesus was not yet glorified.” It is here declared, by the Master himself, that they who believe, in every age and nation, shall

receive the Holy Spirit. The same promise was renewed unto his disciples immediately before he took his departure from them:—"For if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you:"—and "when the Spirit of truth is come, he will guide you into all truth"—"for he shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you," John xvi, 5-14. Accordingly St. Peter said unto his trembling audience on the day of pentecost, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call," Acts ii, 38, 39. In these memorable words, St. Peter undoubtedly refers to the grand promise of Jesus Christ, quoted above, and which had been so recently fulfilled in the hearts of the disciples who had waited at Jerusalem "for the promise of the Father," the promised gift of the Holy Spirit, which was to lead them into all truth. At the time the apostle addressed this multitude, Jesus was *glorified*, and the *promise* of the Holy Spirit had been fulfilled, and this fulfilment of the promise was a *direct* and *infallible testimony* to all who received it, that Jesus Christ had entered upon his kingdom, and that the Spirit had taken the things that belonged to him, and had now imparted them unto his disciples. An indubitable evidence this that Jesus Christ now reigned as a living king, at the right hand of the Majesty on high, inasmuch as it was a complete accomplishment of that grand promise he had made to his disciples before his crucifixion, and renewed to them after his resurrection. To this identical promise the apostle refers in the words under consideration, and assures the people to whom he spoke, that it was made unto *them*—to those who were now listening with such trembling anxiety, for an answer to their question, "What shall we do?"—and not to them only, but also to their *children*—to the next generation—and to *all* that are afar off, even "as many as the Lord our God shall call," in every age and nation, down to the latest generation.

That this is the true interpretation of this grand promise, will appear most evident from numerous passages found in the apostolic writings. St. Paul especially, in the eighth chapter of his epistle to the Romans, dwells upon this subject at large, and corroborates his own sentiments as expressed in this chapter, in various parts of his other epistles. "But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead, *DWELL* in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies, by his Spirit that *DWELLETH* in you." Can the Spirit of God *dwell* in the heart without bearing witness to his own presence, and without exerting his own sanctifying influences? But the reader is requested to mark well the following words:—"For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirits that we are the children of God." One would suppose that these words need no comment. They are not brought in incidentally, while the writer was pursuing another subject; but he is laboring to prove the very point in debate between us and

the reviewer ; to assert this great fundamental truth of the Gospel, namely, that it is the privilege of the children of God to have a satisfactory evidence of their adoption into his family, that they may duly estimate their high and holy privileges : hence he adds, with a sort of holy triumph, as the conclusion of his argument, "If children, then heirs—heirs of God, and joint heirs with our Lord Jesus Christ." And he speaks a language plain and distinct, perfectly familiar to every experimental Christian ; for all such know from painful experience the "spirit of bondage again to fear," and they also know, from most joyful experience, what it is to have the Spirit of God *dwell* in their hearts, to bear *witness* to their adoption, to *lead* them into all necessary truth, and into all holy tempers, words, and actions, as well as *work* in them to "will and to do of his good pleasure."

Nor are the words of the same inspired writer less express and unequivocal in his Epistle to the Galatians, ch. iv, 4-6, "But when the fulness of time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the SPIRIT of his Son INTO YOUR HEARTS, crying, Abba, Father." Could any words more forcibly, more unequivocally, and more pointedly express the doctrine of the *direct witness* of the Spirit? Equally express are the words of St. John, "He that believeth on the Son of God hath the WITNESS in himself." Now if these texts of sacred Scripture do not establish the doctrine for which we contend, and that in the most plain and formal manner, then may we fail to establish any point of doctrine whatever.

No less strong and pointed are the words of the Apostle Paul in the second chapter of his First Epistle to the Corinthians. Speaking of the "hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world, unto our glory, which none of the princes of this world knew," and which their "eye had not seen, nor ear heard, neither entered into the heart of man," to conceive, "the things God hath prepared for them that love him," he adds, "But God hath REVEALED them unto us by his Spirit ; for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God." Here the apostle declares that those "deep things of God" which were hidden from the wise men of the world, who ignorantly crucified the Lord of glory as a vile impostor, were nevertheless *revealed*, or fully *made known* to the children of God, by his eternal Spirit—even that Spirit which searcheth all things, or which taketh of the things of Christ and giveth them to his disciples. It is this Spirit, which "worketh mightily in them that believe," that makes the children of God, however simple in other respects, wiser in the things of God than the wisest of the wise among those who have not the sealing influence of this Spirit.

And what has the reviewer brought against these express and pointed declarations of Holy Scripture? Nothing indeed but bare assertion. We have passed through his remarks, cold and powerless as they are, and not a single text of Scripture enriches his pages from beginning to end. Instead of appealing to the sacred writers for the support of his theory, as if their sacredness and awful solemnity frowned him into a consciousness of the falsity of his specula-

tions and the frivolity of his objections to the doctrine he was assailing, he entertains his readers with common-place remarks about the danger of "animal feeling," "nervous sensibility," "fitfulness in religion," "mysticism," and makes a flourish of well-rounded periods, about the danger of aiming to produce "a swollen torrent of wrong and tumultuous excitement," consisting chiefly in "nervous sensibility." Did he not consider that a religion which has not the Spirit of God in it, can consist of nought but "animal feeling?" That those who imagine themselves Christians without the Spirit of Christ, if they have any excitement at all, it must be a "nervous excitement?" And that all such as rejoice at all, whose joy does not spring from the Holy Spirit, must rejoice under the influence of the "swollen torrent" "of wrong and tumultuous" passions? But we shall, before we close this article, bring some of this reviewer's philosophical remarks to the test of a sound Scriptural and logical argument, and see of what "sort of stuff" they are made.

In the meantime, having fortified Mr. Wesley's doctrine of the witness of the Spirit, by quotations from the sacred Scriptures, we will, in the third place, examine it in the light of some Calvinistic writers, and see if they do not bear testimony to the same inestimable truth.

3. That Mr. Wesley is by no means singular in so strenuously insisting upon the necessity of our having the witness of the Divine Spirit, will appear evident from the following quotations. The first is taken from the Confession of Faith of the Presbyterian Church, of which, if we are rightly informed, the reviewer is now an accredited minister. This says, "*The infallible assurance of faith is founded upon the Divine truth of the promise of salvation, the inward evidence of those graces unto which these promises are made, the testimony of the Spirit of adoption, WITNESSING with our spirit that we are the children of God; which Spirit is the earnest of our inheritance, whereby we are SEALED unto the day of redemption.*" See chap. xviii, pp. 85, 86, of the Confession of Faith. Can words more strongly and explicitly assert the doctrine for which we contend, and for which Mr. Wesley is branded by the reviewer as a "mystic," propagating unintelligible nonsense, fit only for a cloister of gloomy nuns and monks!

And be it remembered that this clear and positive testimony, in favor of the *WITNESS of the Divine Spirit with our spirit*, is not the testimony of an individual merely, but of the entire body of Presbyterians who recognize that article in their Confession of Faith as the standard of their orthodoxy. The reviewer highly censures Mr. Wesley for speaking of the *infallible certainty* which a genuine believer has of the favor of God, and yet, in the above quotation, the Presbyterian Church speaks of "*the INFALLIBLE assurance of faith,*" and says that this "*is founded upon the truth of the promise of salvation,*" or, "*the inward evidence of those graces unto which these promises are made, the testimony of the Spirit of adoption, WITNESSING with our spirit that we are the children of God;*" thereby clearly distinguishing between the *graces*, or *fruits* of the Spirit, the Spirit himself, and the *witness* of the latter with our *own spirit*. Whether, therefore, Mr. Wesley was right or wrong in his views of this subject, he is fully borne out by a most respectable testimony,

and one too which the reviewer will not so readily controvert as he would have done, in all likelihood, if it had come from another source.

The next authority we shall quote, as confirmatory of this doctrine, is that of John Calvin himself, who, though he taught a sentiment on another topic to which we by no means subscribe, yet on the subject under consideration, is clear and strong in favor of the witness and operation of the Spirit upon the heart of the believer. In Book iii, chap. i. after having said that "so long as there is a *separation* between Christ and us, all that he suffered and performed for the salvation of mankind is useless and unavailing to us," and quoting several texts of Scripture showing the necessity of the Spirit's influence, he says, "The sum of all is this, that the Holy Spirit is the *bond* by which Christ efficaciously unites us to himself." In the third section of the same chapter, he has the following words: "He is called the *Spirit of adoption* because he *WITNESSES* to us the gratuitous benevolence of God, with which God the Father hath embraced us in his beloved and only begotten Son, that he might be a Father to us; and *animates* us to pray with confidence, and even dictates expressions, so that we may boldly cry, *Abba, Father*. For the same reason, he is said to be the *earnest* and *seal* of our inheritance; because, while we are pilgrims and strangers in the world, and as persons dead, he *infuses into us such life* from heaven, that we are *CERTAIN* of our salvation being secured by the Divine faithfulness and care."—"This union alone renders his advent in the character of a Saviour available to us."—"It is only by his *SPIRIT* that he *UNITES* himself with us; and by the grace and power of the same Spirit we are made his members; that he may keep us with himself, and we may mutually enjoy him."

In these passages Calvin maintains,

1. That it is the Holy Spirit which *UNITES* believers to Jesus Christ.
2. That he bears *WITNESS* to our *adoption* into the family of God.
3. That he *ANIMATES* us in prayer, and even *dictates expressions* in the performance of this duty.
4. That he brings a *CERTAIN* or *infallible* assurance of the favor of God to our souls.

And then in Book i, chap. vii, where he is showing the necessity of the Divine testimony to authenticate the Holy Scriptures to our hearts, Calvin has these words:—

"For as God alone is a sufficient witness of himself in his own word, so also the word will never gain credit in the hearts of men till it be confirmed by the *INTERNAL testimony of the Spirit*. It is necessary, therefore, that the same Spirit, who spoke by the mouths of the prophets, should *penetrate into our hearts*, to convince us that they faithfully delivered the oracles which were divinely intrusted to them."

This testimony is sufficiently explicit to show that John Calvin was as much a *mystic* upon this delicate point of Christian experience as was John Wesley, and that they both drew from the same well of salvation, when they called upon the people to come up to the high privilege to which they are exalted under the dispensation

of the Spirit, and to drink of the water of life that they might live for ever. We shall be sadly mistaken if some compunctious misgivings of mind are not wrought, by this same Spirit, in the reviewer, for having spoken so contemptuously of that witness of the Spirit, for which two such eminent men as John Wesley and John Calvin pleaded, as it is evident from the foregoing extracts from their writings they did. This fact also of their agreement upon such a vital point of Christian doctrine, gives us a sweet hope, that notwithstanding their differences on the high doctrine of predestination, they are nevertheless in perfect union now in that eternal Spirit, which cements the hearts of all the redeemed before the holy throne of God in heaven. For we consider it much more essential to our salvation that we should teach and experience this testimony of the Divine Spirit, than it is that we should perfectly agree on those other debatable points respecting eternal election and reprobation. This remark we hope will have its due effect upon the heart of our reviewer, who, in this instance, evinces a lamentable blindness to those deep things of God, which the Spirit alone searches out and communicates to the heart of the believer; for it is most expressly said by the Apostle Paul, "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his;" and it seems to us inexplicable how a man who has this Spirit *dwelling in his heart*, leading him "into all truth," and pouring the full tide of its consoling influence over his soul, can deliberately set himself in opposition to its *sealing* efficacy upon the believer's heart. We mean no disrespect by these remarks. They are made for the sole purpose of calling his attention, if the reviewer should deign to give these pages a serious perusal, to this all-important subject, as a matter of personal and religious experience; for, as Calvin very justly remarks, we cannot rightly perceive nor duly appreciate and understand the sacred pages themselves only as they are explained and applied to the heart by the "*internal testimony of the Divine Spirit*."

Another witness to the interesting truth for which we contend, is the learned and pious Witsius, an able Dutch divine, of the Calvinistic school, who wrote his book on the Covenants toward the close of the seventeenth century. After discoursing largely, and, as we think, scripturally, upon the nature and Spirit of adoption, as the common privilege of all the children of God, showing that the grand promise of the Holy Spirit which Jesus Christ made to his disciples, was not intended to be the exclusive privilege of the apostles and primitive Christians, but is the birth-right of all believers in every age and nation, he proceeds in the following manner:—

"But let us now consider the other effects of the Spirit, which, according to the apostle, consist in this, that He *beareth witness with our spirits that we are the children of God*. Here we have *two witnesses* agreeing in *one testimony*." How conformable is this to the doctrine of Mr. Wesley! Witsius goes on, "The one is a lower rank, *our spirit*; the other of the higher, the *Spirit of adoption*, who is the Spirit of the Son of God. By *our spirit* is understood the mind and conscience of every believer, whereby he may be conscious of what passes in his own heart. In this sense the apostle said, *What man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him?* The testimony of this our spirit consists in an

exact representation of our state by certain marks, and a *full assurance of faith*." Here is the *infallible assurance* to our spirit or conscience, by the *witnessing* influence of the Spirit of God, of which Mr. Wesley speaks—"which," Witsius continues, "is followed by a most quiet tranquillity, and a joy unspeakable"—these are the *fruits* or indirect evidences of our adoption, as spoken of by Mr. Wesley. He thence proceeds to describe those marks of our sonship which he calls *infallible*, such as exclude, wherever they are found, all deception. These are, 1. "Good dispositions." 2. "A holy conformity to our Father and elder Brother." 3. "A new life." 4. "A true and sincere love to God." 5. "A filial reverence and obedience." 6. "Unfeigned brotherly love." These sure marks of a true believer in Jesus Christ are what we denominate the *fruits* or effects which necessarily flow from the operation and witness of the Holy Spirit upon the heart. After having given these marks of a truly regenerated soul, of one adopted into the family of God, Witsius continues in the following pious strain, which certainly is descriptive of a heart impressed with the Spirit of the eternal God:—

"Hence it is that, while they are sometimes ravished on high by his Spirit, he surrounds them by the beams of his super-celestial light, gives them a view of his face, shining with the brightest love, kisses them with the kisses of his mouth," (would not the reviewer have sneered with holy contempt if this phraseology had been found in Mr. Wesley's, or any other Methodist's publication, notwithstanding its justification from Scripture example?) "admits them to the most endearing mutual intercourse of mystical love with himself, and, plentifully shedding abroad his love in their hearts, he gives them to drink of rivers of honey and butter"—"Then at length they entirely acquiesce, when, to the testimony of *their own spirit* is superadded that of the *Spirit of God*"—"That testimony is given principally in the following manner. First, the Spirit of God makes these holy habits, which, we have said, were the distinguishing marks of the children of God; and which at times are often involved in much darkness, and covered with much rubbish and filth, to shine with clearness in their souls, and, as it were, readily to present themselves to the contemplation of the mind when examining itself. And then it excites our spirit, otherwise languid, to the diligent observation of our mind, both transacted in and by it, enlightens the eye of the understanding with supernatural light, to prevent our being deceived with what is spurious rather than solid, or our overlooking those things, on the observation of which our consolation depends." Now let the reader mark what follows, and he will perceive the identical truth in relation to this deeply important subject, contended for by Mr. Wesley, and almost in the same language, as well as in the language of Calvin and the Confession of Faith. "There is," says Witsius, "moreover, a certain INTERNAL INSTINCT, which *no human language can explain*, IMMEDIATELY ASSURING God's beloved people of their adoption, no less than if, being received up to the third heavens, they had heard *audibly* from God's own mouth, as the apostle formerly heard in the holy mount, a *voice from the excellent glory*. Lastly, seeing no testimony is stronger than that which is proved by facts, the Spirit of God does not leave himself without *witness* in that respect; exciting generous

motions, and the sweetest raptures in believers, and delighting them with consolations so ravishing and ecstatical, and even exceeding all conceptions, that they cannot consider them in any other light, but as so many testimonies of their adoption. Nor is there any reason to apprehend that the children of God will, in this case, suffer themselves to be imposed upon, or admit for a *testimony of the Holy Spirit*, what is a lie and mere illusion of the deceiving spirit. For in this *voice of the Spirit of God*, there is so much *clearness*, so much *majesty*, and so much *efficacy* whereby it *penetrates* with an irresistible power, into the bottom and *inmost recesses of the heart*, that they who have been accustomed to that voice, can easily distinguish it from all others. The *world*, certainly, *cannot receive this Spirit*, *seeth him not*, *neither knoweth him*; but *Christ's sheep know the voice of their Shepherd*. And when it *sounds*, not so much in their *ears* as in their *hearts*, they joyfully exclaim, *This is the voice of my Beloved. Behold, he cometh.*" See Witsius on the Covenants, vol. ii. p. 203-212.

Can any words in human language more strongly and forcibly express the necessity and *certainty* of the *witness* and the *fruits* of the Holy Spirit, bearing this double testimony to the heart of a believer in Christ that he is a child of God? And will our reviewer say that Witsius was bewildered by the dense fogs of "mysticism?" That his mind was under the influence of a "nervous excitability," or carried away "with the torrent of wrong and tumultuous emotions?" But Witsius was no canting enthusiast. He was a Calvinistic writer of great acuteness of intellect, deeply read in the sacred Scriptures, and strongly imbued, as the above extracts abundantly show, with the Spirit of his Master. And although we greatly differ from him respecting his doctrine of irrespective decrees and unconditional election, yet it is no small confirmation of our faith in the doctrine now under consideration to find him so amply sustaining it against the lukewarm formalists of his day, and in words and arguments so exactly corresponding to those used by Wesley, Calvin, and others.

One of these others is the late President Edwards. In the account which he has left of his life and experience, are the following words, which are directly in point with regard to the witness of the Spirit. He says,—

"The first that I remember that I ever found any thing of that sort of INWARD sweet delight in God and Divine things, that I have lived much in since, was on reading these words, 1 Tim. i. 17: *Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honor and glory for ever and ever. Amen.* As I read these words, there came *into my soul*, and was as it were *diffused through it*, a sense of the glory of the Divine Being; a new sense, quite different from any thing I had ever experienced before."

It may be asked, How this "new sense of the Divine glory" came *into his soul* and became "*diffused through it*," otherwise than by the direct operation of the Holy Spirit? And he must have *known* it by some means, else he would not so confidently have recorded the fact. How could he have known it, unless he had some *inward witness* of the fact, to enable him to distinguish it from all illusions? Although he tells us that it did not immediately occur to "his mind,

there was any thing saving in all this," yet he afterward fully satisfied himself that it came from God, for he says it was the same 'sweet delight in God and Divine things that he had lived much in since.' That this Divine afflatus came upon his mind *mediately*, that is, through the medium of a most sublime passage of Holy Scripture, forms no valid objection against the reality of the work then wrought, or the certainty with which this *diffusion*, as President Edwards calls it, was accompanied to his soul, that it was the witness of God's Spirit. Allowing therefore, that his experience of Divine things was scriptural and genuine, and of this we have no doubt, it must also be allowed that he then received a direct and sealing evidence of his adoption into the family of God. Nor will this critical reviewer, we are persuaded, unless he sacrifice a consciousness of truth to a desire to be consistent with himself throughout, class President Edwards, who is such a favorite author among the New-England divines, with the "mystic" writers of the eighteenth century. If, however, contrary to our expectation, he should be tempted to do this, and also, to get rid of their authority on this point, to cover up the compilers of the Confession of Faith, Calvin, and Witsius, in the rubbish of 'mysticism,' 'nervous excitement,' and 'morbid sensibility,' we may then attempt to fortify our doctrine by some more modern writers; for we can assure him that we shall not surrender, without a struggle, so vital a principle in Christian theology, interwoven as it is in the creeds and confessions of every Protestant denomination considered orthodox, and so consoling to the hearts and consciences of all true believers in Christ. This evidence of all true religion in the heart is too deeply radicated in the system of Christianity, to be rooted up by the feeble spade of human philosophy, and too strongly and widely ramified in the various systems of theology which have been spread out on the pages of orthodox Protestants, to be torn up by an arm so feebly supported by the props of Scripture proof as is that of our reviewer. He has not, indeed, deigned to give us a single text to sustain his theory, nor even to do away the force of those quoted in Mr. Wesley's sermon by a different exegesis, but contents himself by interposing his negation to the explanation which Mr. Wesley had given.

We can hardly resist the inclination to give our readers one more testimony in favor of this truth: it is found in the "Faith and Order of the Churches of New-England," as recorded in *Mather's Magnalia*, vol. ii. pp. 168, 169. In chap. xvi, on "Good Works," it is declared that,—

"Their ability to do good works, is not at all in themselves, but wholly from the Spirit of Christ. And that they may be enabled thereunto, besides the graces they have already received, there is an *actual influence of the same Holy Spirit*, to work in them to will and to do of his own good pleasure."

In the xviiith chap., which treats of the "Assurance of Grace and Salvation," are the following words:—

"Although temporary believers and other unregenerate men may vainly deceive themselves with false hopes, and carnal presumptions of being in the favor of God, and state of salvation, which hope of theirs shall perish, yet such as truly believe in the Lord Jesus, and

love him in sincerity, endeavoring to walk in good conscience before him, may, in *this life*, be *certainly assured*, that they are in a state of grace, and may rejoice in hope of the glory of God, which hope shall never make them ashamed. This certainty is not a bare conjecture, and probable persuasion, grounded upon a fallible hope, but an *infallible assurance of faith*, founded on the blood and righteousness of Christ, revealed in the Gospel; and also upon the *inward evidences* of those graces, unto which promises are made, and on the IMMEDIATE WITNESS OF THE SPIRIT, *testifying* our adoption, and as a *fruit* thereof, leaving the heart more humble and holy."

Here is true Wesleyan Methodism, as held and taught in the Congregational Churches in New-England in 1680, the time that these articles were adopted. Here is the doctrine of the *immediate witness of the Spirit*, bringing to the heart of the believer an *infallible assurance* of faith, even the *inward evidence*, for which Wesley and the Methodists contend, followed by its *fruit*, a more *humble and holy heart*. By this our readers may see how far the reviewer has departed from the doctrines of his forefathers, the ancient puritans of New-England. And in the above extract the *ability* to do good works in ourselves is as flatly contradicted as the necessity and certainty of the Holy Spirit is asserted, plainly showing thereby that the modern Congregationalists have departed no less from their fathers in respect to "natural ability," than they have on the doctrine of the witness and influence of the Holy Spirit.

Believing that these testimonies are quite sufficient for our purpose, and that they cannot be set aside by any arts of sophistry whatever, we shall now proceed to examine some of the reviewer's positions, and bring them to the test of scriptural and logical deductions.

1. In the first place, there appears to us a misstatement, in one particular at least, of Mr. Wesley's views, or rather of what he attempted to do. The reviewer says that, "These sermons undertake to furnish an exact view of the *mode* of operation. The fault then consists in an attempt to transmute a theory into a doctrine; to reduce the explanation into his *standard*, and thus enforce belief in it as a leading article in Christian theology. It is the same fault as that spirit of theorizing, which, under various forms and from various motives, plunges into the deep things of God to seek **THE HOW**, **THE MODE**, where revelation has withheld it, and imposes its speculations upon the world as the only wisdom—the essential doctrine," p. 359.

What tinsel is here! How pretty to talk about 'transmuting a *theory* into a doctrine!' What is a 'theory' (θεωρία) but the exposition of the general principles of any science, and thus stands opposed to and distinguished from mere *hypothesis*? This latter is a gratuitous proposition, assumed by the speculative theorist without any rational evidence for its support, for the purpose of accounting for any phenomena, and therefore has no other testimony to its truth than the supposititious one that it affords a manner of explaining those phenomena. These *hypothetical* speculations, of which our reviewer gives an admirable specimen in his account of the Christian character, have introduced abundance of confusion into the philosophical, moral, and religious world, and should therefore be repudiated by every lover of truth and order. But a *theory* is

widely different; this is founded on inferences drawn from established principles, independently of all mere *hypothesis*—principles logically deduced from doctrines of established and admitted truth. We allow, indeed, that a man may amuse himself and his readers with mere barren speculations, and thus *theorise* himself into a notion, vain as it is untrue, that a man's religious character is formed by "a proper cultivation of human nature."

But was John Wesley such a speculative theorist? Did he bring in his theory of the witness of the Spirit, as a hypothesis to account for the *mode* of that Spirit's operation? No indeed! He found in the sacred Scriptures in numerous places, and that in the most unambiguous language, the fact asserted, that the Spirit of God bears witness to the spirit of every true believer that he is a child of God. This fact he attempted in the most modest manner to explain, not by adopting a hypothetical speculation to explain a moral phenomenon, but by clothing his ideas in plain and familiar language, expressive, as he believed, of the identical meaning of the inspired writers. His *theory*, therefore, was drawn from the *doctrine* of the Bible, as he understood it; and he brought the language of the Bible, not to support a previously formed theory, but to attest a matter of fact, which was contained in the text that furnished the foundation of his discourse.

But we have quoted this passage from the reviewer to show how much he has misunderstood, and therefore misrepresented, no doubt unintentionally, Mr. Wesley. The reviewer represents him as attempting to seek *THE HOW, THE MODE*, of the Spirit's operation upon the human soul. Now let us contrast this representation with what Mr. Wesley himself has said of his intention. In his sermon on this subject, he has these words, which, one would think, should have shielded him from any such objection as this which the reviewer has preferred:—

"The *manner* how the *Divine* testimony is manifested to the heart, I do not take upon me to explain. Such knowledge is too wonderful and excellent for me: I cannot attain unto it. The wind bloweth, and I know the sound thereof; but I cannot tell *how* it cometh, or whither it goeth. As no one knoweth the things of man, save the spirit of man which is in him; so the *manner* of the things of God knoweth no one, save the Spirit of God. But the *fact* we *know*; namely, that the Spirit of God does give to a believer such a testimony of his adoption, that *while it is present* to the soul, he can no more doubt the reality of his sonship, than he can doubt of the shining of the sun, while he stands in the full blaze of his beams;" vol. i. p. 89.

Is this the language of a vain speculatist, who, by some moral alchemy, is striving to "transmute a theory into a doctrine," in order to explain *the how* and *the mode*, by which his phenomenon can be verified? It is true that in this same sermon, under the first head, section 11, he very properly inquires *how* the Spirit of God bears witness to our spirits that we are his children; but this *how* relates not to the Spirit's *operation*, but to the marks by which the soul, on which he operates, may *perceive, know*, or be *conscious* of such operation,—the same as if a philosophical lecturer should attempt to explain to his pupil, who might be listening to a 'theory' of the

wind, *how* he might know that the wind does actually blow, while he professes his entire ignorance as to the *cause* or *manner* of the wind's motion.

Mr. Wesley, therefore, so far from attempting to explain *how* the Divine Spirit operates, contents himself with the simple fact, as it stands on record in the sacred writings, and then proceeds, not "to transmute a theory into a doctrine" of his own, or to convert an idle hypothesis into a spiritual alchemy, in order to explain this moral phenomenon upon the mind, but to support this fact by other parallel passages of similar phraseology and import, and finally to explain *how* the conscious believer may perceive and be satisfied that he himself is the happy recipient of this sacred deposit.

The reader may easily determine which depends most upon a philosophical theory, when he is informed that Mr. Wesley, under the first head of his discourse, brings no less than *ten* parallel texts, all from the New Testament, in support of the doctrine he was explaining, while the reviewer does not appeal to a solitary text to sustain himself, but, as before remarked, simply denies the interpretation of Wesley, and then brings his theory, built, as it is, upon the false assumption that no man can be the recipient of such a witness, as a substitute for the scriptural doctrine for which Wesley, Calvin, Witsius, Edwards, and the Confession of Faith had contended. How illy does it become such a writer to talk about "transmuting a theory into a doctrine," and of bringing this theory to explain a passage of sacred Scripture! Whereas the true state of the case is, Mr. Wesley found it unequivocally stated by the inspired writers, as an undeniable fact, that all truly converted souls have God's Spirit to witness with theirs that they are born of God. This fact, so plainly asserted in God's word, he brought to bear upon the sinner's conscience, as a matter, not of speculative belief, but of heart-felt experience—as a test of Christian character—as a privilege to which all true believers in Jesus Christ are exalted—and as a seal of their adoption into the family of the saints.*

2. In the second place let us notice our reviewer's "theory" of the Christian character, which he professes to place in contrast with that of Mr. Wesley. He says,—

"It is certain that every converted man may be assured of his conversion. Or, rather, regeneration, the change wrought, evidences itself,—it is a matter of consciousness; and to talk of its evidences, as something apart and distinct from its nature, is to use language without precision. Our exercises are the offspring, not of an undefinable *gracious ability*, but of our moral agency; we produce them voluntarily; of course they come under our notice, and we may have a distinct and accurate consciousness of our moral state," p. 356.

Now let it be remembered that this definition of the Christian character comes in immediately after the writer of it had declared that Mr. Wesley's "doctrine of impressions must be regarded as an unwarrantable fancy of mysticism." But why is it that Mr. Wesley's doctrine is a mere mystical fancy? Why? because it

* For a more complete refutation of the reviewer's theory, on this point, the reader is referred to the piece which follows this, by another hand.

taught that a believer may be conscious that he has God's Spirit. And yet this writer affirms that a Christian is conscious that he is such. Then it follows that he is conscious that his heart has been regenerated *without* the Spirit of God. But, says this writer, "every converted man may be *assured* of his conversion." May he indeed? What *assures* him? Not the Spirit of God. This is "an unwarrantable fancy of mysticism." He is therefore *assured* of it by something apart from, and entirely independent of, the Spirit of God: he must be *assured* that he is converted from a consciousness that the change has taken place without the presence and agency of the Divine Spirit; that is, we suppose, according to this writer's account, "from his own moral agency;" for he will not allow so much as even a "gracious ability" to assist in this great work of renovation. Is not this "self-conversionism?" And yet this writer condemns Mr. Wesley for "transmuting a theory into a doctrine!" What marvellous consistency is here! And what is more marvellous still, the reviewer condemns Mr. Wesley because he holds that the Christian may arrive, by the double testimony of God's Spirit and his own, to an *assurance* of faith, or of his acceptance in the sight of God; although he himself allows, in the passage we are examining, that the regenerate may "arrive to a *knowledge* of his state," may be "*assured* of his conversion" "from consciousness," while he remains *unconscious* of the Spirit of God either as a direct or an indirect witness! If this inconsistent theory be not "an unwarrantable fancy of mysticism," engendered in the thick fog of neologistic inanity, we know not by what name it ought to be distinguished.*

The reviewer says, "true feelings of religion spring not from direct efforts to produce them; they are the result of the proper cultivation of human nature." Here again the Spirit of God is excluded. *Religious* feeling is the result of the proper cultivation of human nature! And yet, says he, "to be religious we must have feeling, just as certainly as there must be undulations in the air." Now if a man has no consciousness of the presence and operation of the Divine Spirit, and yet has "religious feeling," such a feeling as excites him to action, must it not be mere "animal excitement," the "offspring of his own moral exercises?" And if they are not brought into action by God's Spirit, which they cannot be if he has it not, admitting he has those feelings, must he not make "direct efforts to produce them?" Or do they come on him involuntarily, like *St. Vitus' dance*, and set him in motion whether he will or no? Or does this theoretical writer suppose that the heart may be regenerated by the Spirit of God, and the subject of this work moved to action and *feeling* in a way that he remains entirely unconscious of the presence and agency of that Spirit? If he believes in such an incredible paradox, he may "stretch his faith's capacity" to any length he pleases, and believe that a man may be under the influence of the eternal Spirit, while moved to action by mere "nervous excitability." If this be not substituting "a theory" in the place of a

* We had written thus far when the strictures which follow this article were put into our hands, by a writer who seems to understand the subject, and to which therefore the reader is referred for a fuller exposure of the theoretical sophisms of this erratic reviewer upon this, and some other points we had intended to examine.

plain scriptural "doctrine," it is at least transmuting moral consciousness into the blind impulses of a disordered imagination.

After thus excluding the Spirit of God from the religion which he inculcates, who would have expected to hear him talk in the following strain?—

"Religion fills the soul with joy that is deep and sublime. It gives the character a chastened enthusiasm, a quenchless ardor, a sublime earnestness. It has its seat in the heart."

We might ask what it is that *fills the heart with joy*? Were we to answer in the language of Divine inspiration, we should say that it is the possession of that kingdom which consists of "*righteousness, peace, and JOY in the HOLY GHOST*,"—of that "*LOVE of God which is shed abroad in the HEART by the HOLY GHOST*," one of the fruits of which is JOY. But our philosophical reviewer excludes from his theory of religion all such sources of joy as "unwarrantable fancies of mysticism." According to him, it is "the proper cultivation of human nature," "the offspring of our voluntary exercises," which forms the religious character, and, of course, if the heart be "filled with joy," it must be a joy produced by direct human efforts. And this "quenchless ardor," this "sublime earnestness," whence do they arise? From "direct efforts of our own to produce them?" This would be wrong, notwithstanding our religious character is to be formed by an "improvement of human nature," by our *own voluntary exercises*! Do they flow from the testimony and sanctifying influences of the Divine Spirit? To assert this would be a proof that we are under the dictation of a *fanciful mysticism*. In such a dilemma as this to which the writer reduces us, we are compelled to adopt the mournful language of one of the earlier visitors to the sepulchre, "They have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him." Between this powerless religion of nature which the reviewer has set up, and that of the Bible which Mr. Wesley taught, and the critic rejects, our common Christianity has disappeared, and we know not where it can be found.

But the heart of the Christian is *filled with joy*. And does the Christian *know* it? How? By the Spirit which God has given to *dwell in his heart*? Not in the least. This is discarded as Wesley's *mysticism*. If therefore this joy be *known* at all, it must be simply by a consciousness that it arises from a *proper improvement of human nature*, and not from a consciousness of *acceptance in the Beloved*, by the Spirit which God hath given to those that believe on Jesus. Or does this advocate for this bald religion of nature suppose that the *heart may be filled with joy*, and nevertheless be unconscious of it? But what possible benefits can result to him from an unknown, unconscious joy? How different was the religion of St. Paul, when he prayed that the Ephesian brethren might "be filled with all the fulness of God." What a *fanciful mystic* was this apostle! What "sublime earnestness and quenchless ardor" did he exhibit when he exhorted the Philippians to "rejoice in the LORD always," and told the Ephesians that they must be *FILLED* with the *SPIRIT*! This was the height of Wesleyan mysticism! Like that, a "quenchless ardor," which all the waters of strife could not dampen.

Now we venture to affirm that, if our critic has given a true de-

lineation of the Christian's character, he can never be excited by any thing besides "animal passions," or the mere natural impulses of an unjaded imagination, or the blind emotions of a morbid sensibility; for he raises his voice against the internal operation of the Holy Spirit, as being in itself a hallucination of a disordered mind; and therefore, this Divine afflatus being excluded, whatever joy may be produced, whatever emotion excited, or whatever action performed, it can be nothing more than an impulse of the natural heart, or the movement of the moral and intellectual powers, acting under the influence of those motives which move the mind to action in this work, the same as in any merely physical or secular enterprise. Thus is the religion of Jesus Christ stripped of its spirituality, deprived of its characteristic and vital principle, and despoiled of that beauty in which, above all others, its distinguished excellence consists.

The whole amounts to this:—The Christian either *has* or *has not* the Spirit of Christ; if he *has*, then is the doctrine of Wesley true; if he *has it not*, then is he in his *natural state*, and of course has no other religion than what may be acquired "by a proper cultivation of human nature;" there is no medium: for if he has not the Spirit of Christ, he has no *grace*, it being only by this Spirit that grace is communicated to the soul, even that grace which bringeth salvation through faith in Jesus Christ. In this way has our reviewer struck a fatal blow to the whole and every part of that grand and distinguishing doctrine of *salvation by grace, through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ*, which forms one of the characteristic peculiarities of the Christian religion.

We had intended, as the subject is one of such vital importance, to pursue it somewhat farther, by showing the absolute necessity of having the witness and influence of the Holy Spirit, to produce that comfortable assurance of our acceptance in the Beloved, and those holy and devout exercises which alone sustain and distinguish the Christian during his pilgrimage. And even now, although this article has so lengthened out as to become, we fear, tiresome to the reader, we must be permitted to add some thoughts which seem to us naturally to grow out of the subject.

The whole amount of our reviewer's objections seems based upon the assumption that it is impossible to distinguish the workings of our own hearts from the operations of the Spirit of God. If this be so, then may we for ever despair of any satisfactory evidence that we have been "brought from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God." That we should be left in this most painful uncertainty on a subject in which our everlasting interests are involved, is not only abhorrent to our feelings, but also contrary to every view we can take of the attributes of God, of the economy of salvation, of either the promises of pardon, or the threatenings of punishment.

1. God has threatened us with everlasting punishment if we do not prepare to meet him. But would he do this without ever letting us know whether we are prepared or not? Would a wise and benevolent master do this with any of his servants? Would he threaten and absolutely inflict punishment upon a servant for not doing a duty, of the nature of which he was ignorant, or of so difficult and ambiguous a character, that he could not know whether it was done or left undone? This indeed would be a hard case. And

shall we attribute such a defect to the government of our heavenly Father? But we are assured in his word, that the only way for us to prepare to meet him is to be purified by the blood of Christ, *through the eternal Spirit*—that those who have not the *Spirit of Christ* are none of his—and that except we are *born of the Spirit*, we cannot enter the kingdom of heaven. Those, therefore, who *deny* that we may be conscious that we *have the Spirit of Christ*, even that “Spirit by which we may know the things which are freely given us of God,” do, in effect, deny the possibility of our being able ever to arrive to any comfortable assurance of our preparedness to see the face of God in peace. Thus the consolations of that *hope by which we are saved*, are taken from us by this denial of the testimony of God’s Spirit.

2. Promises of pardon are made to the penitent believer. What comfort can such derive from these promises if they can have no satisfactory assurance that they are fulfilled? But this assurance is made to depend upon the *sealing* testimony of the Spirit of God. “After that ye believed, ye were SEALED with that Holy Spirit of promise.” “Grieve not the Holy Spirit, whereby ye are SEALED unto the day of redemption.” The promise of pardon is connected with the promise of this Spirit—“I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts”—“For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more.” How are these laws *written upon the heart*, but by the Spirit of the living God? And what is it that is there written, but a *knowledge* of that pardon which is promised as one of the privileges of the new and everlasting covenant? Take away, then, this Spirit from our religion, and we have no evidence left to assure our hearts of pardon. Thus does the spiritless theory invented by this reviewer, deprive the penitent believer of the only means of assurance furnished by the Scriptures, that his sins are pardoned, and his iniquities remembered no more.

3. The consolations of religion are all represented as flowing from the Holy Spirit. Hence he is called emphatically *The Comforter*. But what sort of comfort is that of which the heart is unconscious? If the belief that we have the Spirit of God is a delusion, then certainly no solid and lasting comfort can be derived from this Spirit. An unconscious joy and comfort is just the same as no joy and comfort at all. It inspires no more hope, gives no more satisfaction, than water would administer to a thirsty man, were it given to him in such a way as to deprive him of all sense of his having received it. The Spirit, therefore, even the Spirit of consolation, which is given, less or more, to every true believer, must be *felt* in the heart, must produce a *consciousness* of his own presence, in order to convey that comfort to the believer which he needs, and which it was designed especially to impart. So truly, then, does the religion of our reviewer take away this means of consolation, which the religion of the Bible promises and furnishes to the weary pilgrim through life. For although he contends that the believer has “his soul filled with joy,” it is not a *joy in the Holy Ghost*—not a joy arising from a consciousness of the Divine favor through the witnessing influence of the eternal Spirit, but from some other source,—from what source, except it be from a “direct effort of our own to produce it,”

seems difficult to tell. If we have a joy at all, it must come either from the Spirit of God, from ourselves, or from the devil; but the reviewer will not allow that it comes from God's Spirit, such a belief being an "unwarrantable fancy of mysticism;" therefore, according to his theory, it arises either solely from our own hearts, or from the influence of the "evil one." Let him take his choice. The first is Mr. Wesley's source of joy—and we choose the same.

Now, is it not easy to perceive that all scriptural consolation is taken from the believer by the speculative notions of this critic? So far do persons wander upon the cheerless deserts of a barren philosophy, when they once forsake the plain path trodden by prophets and apostles, martyrs and reformers. Let the reader turn to our quotations from the sacred Scriptures, from Wesley, the Confession of Faith, Calvin, Witsius, and Edwards, and compare them with the speculations of this writer, whose hypothesis he has not attempted to support by one solitary text from the Bible.

4. To all this it may be objected, that we must go to the Bible for our religion—we must examine our hearts by the Bible. We allow, indeed, not that our religion is in the Bible, but that we must, nevertheless, examine our hearts by this infallible standard. Well, what says the Bible? It invites all the thirsty to come to the spiritual fountain, and drink of the water of life. It says, "He that drinketh of the water that I shall give, shall never thirst"—and "this spake he of the SPIRIT, which all who believe in him should receive." It says, not once or twice, not incidentally, nor mysteriously, but in several places, and that in a set and formal manner, in the most emphatic language, in the most unequivocal terms—terms that cannot well be misunderstood—that the *love of God is shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost*—that *if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his*—that those who have this Spirit bring forth its *fruits*, which are *love, peace, joy, faith, meekness, goodness, long-suffering, gentleness, temperance*—affirming that those who thus give evidence that they belong to Christ, have *crucified the flesh, with the affections and lusts*—and that *against such, and only such, there is no law*—and, finally, that he that saith that he loveth God and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar. These are all Bible declarations.

Now the question is, where are we to look for this Spirit and its fruits? Are we to look into the Bible for them? Can any man be so foolish—we cannot use a more appropriate term—as to suppose that the love of God and the witness and fruits of the Spirit grow in the Bible—flourish amidst paper, and the impressions of types? This is too shallow to be admitted, even by a *fanciful mystic*. We are therefore to look *into our own hearts*, to examine our tempers, and to compare our daily conduct with those requirements, and with those descriptions of the Christian's character. Here, if any where, the Spirit of God must DWELL, and here its holy fruits must GROW and thrive, being watered continually by the river of God's grace. Our religion, therefore, is not *in the Bible*, nor is the *Bible our religion*; but the Bible tells us what religion *is*, directs *where* and *how* to obtain it, *what* is its nature and properties, *fruits* and *evidences*; and for this religion, its fruits and evidences, we must look into our hearts, our affections, tempers, and conduct; if these be in corre-

spondence with what the Bible describes as true religion, then we have a right to conclude that we have it; but if otherwise, that we have it not.

To make this matter plain to every reader—for we wish to profit those who read—and to show the utter futility and nonsensical absurdity of the objection we are canvassing, let us suppose that a man perishing for want of water applies to a friend for direction to some fountain where he may slake his thirst. This friend puts a book into his hand, accompanied with a map of the way to the fountain, and lest he might mistake its meaning, he gives the famishing mendicant an easy and familiar explanation of all its parts, and leaves him with this simple admonition, 'Follow the directions laid down in this book and you shall *assuredly* find the flowing fountain of water, of which if you drink, you shall be refreshed and return rejoicing.' The poor man follows the direction, finds the running pool, drinks, and returns with joy upon his countenance, crying out, *I have found it, I have found it!* 'Hush!' says one reviewer, 'you are actuated by a *torrent of wrong and tumultuous passions*, which have bewildered your brain. Your water is in your book. See how correctly it has described the fountain of water, and the path that leads to it. Is not this enough? Rejoice in this discovery, and satisfy yourself by your own voluntary exercises, and do not display an unwarrantable fancy of mysticism, by persuading yourself that you have actually drunk of the flowing stream. Leave this delusion to those Methodistic mystics whose superstitious leader has bewildered them.'

No one, we suppose, will admire this monitory speech. And yet its absurdity is not more glaring than is that of those who tell us that we must look into the Bible for our religion, instead of examining ourselves, by its marks and directions, whether we be in the faith. The Bible describes the Christian's character and privilege. How shall he know whether that character belongs to him but by examining himself, and comparing the result of that examination with what the Bible ascribes as belonging to the Christian? He nowhere finds in the Bible his personal identity. He finds not his name therein recorded, nor finds himself personally addressed, assuring him that he has a personal interest in Jesus Christ. How then shall he know whether or not he has such an interest? Can he otherwise know it than by the inward voice of the Spirit? And if, when he thinks he has this Spirit, but has not such an assurance as excludes all doubt—which may often be the case when the testimony is not entirely clear—how is he to satisfy himself that it is no delusion, but by ascertaining that he bears the fruits, and that he 'walks by the same rule and minds the same thing.' Having assured himself by this simple process, that he has been born into the kingdom of God, he then feels himself entitled to the privileges of his children, and now 'rejoices in hope of the glory of God.' Mr. Wesley says, 'Whoever has the fruits of the Spirit, *love, peace, joy, &c.*, inwardly feels them; whence they come, he learns from the Bible.'

Having sufficiently exposed the absurdity of this objection, we proceed to examine the pretensions of such as *hope* they have a title to the heavenly inheritance. What is the object of *hope*? It is always fixed on something *future*. We never hope either for the

past or present. It supposes also the *absence* of the thing for which we hope. What is the *foundation* of hope? If it be rational, it is founded upon some evidence that the thing is within our reach, or is attainable. Now the Christian's hope is fixed on heaven as the ultimate end of all his labors, his watching, of his faith and prayers; and upon the grace of God in Christ Jesus, to sustain and comfort him through every stage of his spiritual pilgrimage. But this hope is founded upon the assurance he now enjoys, from the testimony of God's Spirit and its fruits, of the favor of God; and upon the promises of his word, which he finds in the Bible, for protection, succor, and direction, while he is travelling through this vale of tears to another world. This hope he has, 'as an anchor to his soul, which entereth into that within the veil, whither Christ, the forerunner, hath for us entered.'

Now let us see how this hope grows up in the soul. In the first place, the sinner is convinced of his sinfulness. Hearing that Jesus Christ died to save sinners, and that he is able and willing to save all those who come unto God by him, and forming the determination that he will, by the grace of God, seek after him, he *hopes* to find pardon. He *seeks*—he *finds*. He now hopes, by the efficient aid of God's Spirit, which has brought him an evidence of his pardon or justification, to persevere, and therefore holds fast his *confidence steadfastly to the end*, believing that he shall finally receive the *recompense of reward*. It will be perceived that in all this process his hope is fixed on something future, and that it is founded upon the mercy of God in Christ Jesus, the evidence of which mercy he has, *first*, in the word of God, which is manifested to sinners in general, and *secondly*, in his own heart, because it has been manifested there by the direct operations and *sealing* influence of God's Spirit. Now he has a hope full of immortality, and of course, 'rejoices in hope of the glory of God.'

For a man to hope for heaven or eternal happiness, while he has no satisfactory evidence that he is a child of God, is to delude himself with false appearances; and to *hope* merely, that he is a Christian, without those internal and external evidences, we have before described, that he is such, is to build upon a false foundation; a true Gospel hope being founded upon an *inward consciousness* arising from the testimony of God's Spirit, that he is *now* accepted in the sight of God, through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. The Christian, therefore, does not hope that he is in the favor of God; of this he has a most cheering and satisfactory evidence: an evidence communicated to his soul by the Spirit of adoption, and which is corroborated to him by the testimony of his own spirit, and by all those collateral evidences arising out of holy tempers and a holy life, called in Scripture, "keeping the commandments of God."

"Hope that is seen," says the apostle, "is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for?" What a man hath *now* in his possession is not an object of his hope; but the true believer in Christ hath *now* in his possession the *love of God which passeth understanding*, a knowledge of his "salvation by the remission of sins;" and therefore, for these things he does not hope. But while he enjoys these unspeakable blessings, he has a well grounded hope of eternal life. Those therefore who, like our reviewer, deny to

the Christian the witness and fruits of the Divine Spirit, exclude from his heart every well grounded hope of future happiness, and throw him upon those "frames and feelings" which arise from a "fitful state of religious enjoyment" and which characterize those who are "unstable in all their ways." On the other hand, all those who "have this hope in them"—this hope which springs from a knowledge of their being in a state of favor with God, "purify themselves even as he is pure;" and, watching unto prayer, persevering therein with all thanksgiving, living daily in the exercise of that "faith which is of the operation of God," are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.

Allowing the truth of these remarks—and we think they cannot be successfully controverted—it is improper for a Christian who now enjoys the love of God in his heart, accompanied with that "peace of God which passeth all understanding," to say, *I hope I have these blessings*. Though a becoming modesty may have dictated the use of this phraseology at first, yet it will by no means bear a strict examination in the light of a true Christian experience, and in view of a scriptural and rational account of this subject. A penitent sinner, one who is earnestly groaning for redemption in the blood of Christ, may say, *I hope for pardon and peace*. Having been "justified by faith," and thereby having "peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ," he may say, *I hope by the mercy of God in Christ Jesus, to persevere to the end of my pilgrimage, and then to attain to everlasting life*. But a hope of heaven which excludes all consciousness of the Divine favor, "is founded upon the sand" of a delusive scheme of religion, fitted only for those mystical reveries which spring up in the brain and bewilder the understandings of those who "have not the Spirit."

6. Do any say that the thing is impossible? But "are not all things possible with God?" Wherein consists the impossibility? Can not that eternal Spirit which first made the spirit of man, communicate with it, and that, too, in a way and language that may be understood? But we know the thing is *not* impossible. We know that God did thus speak to patriarchs and prophets, to apostles and evangelists, and to all the primitive saints and martyrs. This is unquestionable. The possibility of the thing, therefore, must be yielded. The only question is, *Does* he thus communicate to the hearts of his believing people now, a knowledge of himself, of his pardoning love, by this Holy Spirit? We might answer this question in the affirmative, not only by appealing to the saints before the canon of Scripture was completed, but also by the experience of some of the most wise and holy among God's people in every period of the Church. Unless, therefore, these have all given a false testimony, or have been deluded by the glare of a false philosophy, the fact is undeniably proved by the uniform testimony of all the children of God, who have left their experience upon record.

But this strange objection, which limits the Holy One of Israel, and professes to fix bounds to his way of working, derives all its force from the supposition that God does not *now* deal with his children as he did in former times—as he did in the days of the Old and New Testaments. This last refuge to which the objector flees, takes for granted that God's dispensations have changed, that he

either requires less of his people now than formerly, or that he denies to them the same privileges,—either of which suppositions contains a manifest absurdity. In regard to plenary inspiration, for the foretelling of future events, or authoritatively issuing new commandments, precepts, or promises, or making new revelations, or for the working of miracles, in the common acceptance of that term, we know that the time has passed—the book is sealed—the whole will of God is already proclaimed in his written word. Yet, in respect to true religion, the love of God and man, it is immutable—the same yesterday, to day, and for ever. The manner in which it is to be sought, found, tested, and exemplified in practical life, never fluctuates, never varies to suit the times, circumstances, whims or fancies, nor even the philosophical reveries of any man.

If this be not so, it is totally useless to appeal to the Scriptures at all for the test of Christian character. If this test is not to be applied to us, it utterly fails of its object, and we might as well appeal to the Koran as to the Bible, with a view to “try the spirits whether they are of God.” If the same doctrine, experience, moral and religious practice, are not to be believed, felt, and exemplified now, as in the primitive ages of Christianity, then we may burn our Bibles, and imitate the practice of our reviewer, that is, “transmute a theory of our own into a doctrine” of belief, and a test of Christian character, and talk smoothly about “human nature being a glorious harp, capable of yielding music as rich as that which gladdens paradise;” and then say, as he does, “that Christianity finds it out of order, and perverted to degrading services, and aims to tune and fit it for its appropriate use;” but at the same time affirm that this harp may be put in tune without even a touch of that eternal Spirit which first set it in motion—without even a single stroke upon its delicate chords by that Hand which makes the music of the spheres, and by his all pervading influence and guiding magnet keeps the heavens in order and preserves them in perennial beauty! Pray tell us, ye wise ones of the east, what beside this Divine Restorer of human nature can take this once “glorious harp” in hand, readjust its numerous chords, and reattune them to their primitive music? Can all this be done by any thing short of the breath of the Almighty? Until Jesus “breathes upon” it, and says, “Receive ye the Holy Ghost,” it will still make those discordant sounds which indicate that it is yet “out of order, and perverted to those degrading services” which render it unfit to swell the chorus of paradise.

7. We have dwelt the longer on this subject, not because our “favorite author,” the Rev. John Wesley, has been assailed, or because it is *his* doctrine which has been controverted; but more especially because we consider this among the most important doctrines of Jesus Christ, the master Teacher of us all. Take away the Holy Spirit from his Gospel, and what have you left? You have, indeed, “the letter which killeth,” but the “Spirit which giveth life,” is fled, and with it all that is lovely and energetic in the experimental part of his religion. The mere belief in his eternal Divinity, in his atonement, and in the prescriptive parts of his Gospel, will profit us nothing; we shall still be as “a sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal,” unless our belief be accompanied with that burning charity, which *hopeth* and *endureth* all things, and which “never

faileth." But this charity, this Divine love, is not of terrestrial origin, is not acquired by a "proper improvement of human nature," but it is a supernatural gift, is "shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost," and by this means alone is it acquired. The doctrines of the Gospel, the word of God, the preaching of the Cross, the ordinances of the Church, and the performance of external duties, all, all, are cold and powerless if they be not accompanied by the Holy Spirit. It is this quickening agent which gives life and animation to all Christian duties, whether public or private. Take this away from Christianity, and you have a lifeless skeleton. Infuse this into it and it becomes a "living soul." Christianity imbodyed in the head, the heart, the soul and affections of a man, becomes a living, moving monument of the Divine wisdom, power, and love, presenting the outward lineaments of a perfect Christian, and at the same time breathing the inward emotions, and exhibiting the visible actions, of a faithful and laborious servant of the most high God. But this monument, unless animated by the "Spirit of the living creatures," is but a "whited sepulchre." Let this eternal Spirit enter it, and it rises above the world, soars aloft in the holy atmosphere which surrounds it, borne on the wing of the Almighty, counting all earthly things "loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Jesus Christ."

This doctrine, therefore, of the witness and fruits, the sanctifying and comforting influences of the Holy Spirit, is of too vital importance, too closely interwoven into the entire web of Christianity, to be sacrificed upon the altar of a human theory, or of a speculative philosophy. We feel indeed as if we were contending for the "pearl of great price"—for the faith that is "more precious than gold"—for the *very heart and soul*, yea, the *life blood* of the Christian religion: for the blood is not more essential to the life and action of the physical system, than the eternal Spirit is to the health and vigorous action of the moral powers in all religious matters. As the heart of man must cease to beat whenever the blood stops its circulation through the veins and arteries, even so does the professor of religion cease to live and move in obedience to God's will, in all spiritual things, when destitute of the Spirit of the living God. But while this "Spirit of life" is present in the heart, regulating its pulsations, giving free circulation to all its thoughts, emotions, and affections, the Christian moves forward, making a delightful progress in "the race set before him," continually "looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of his faith."

Before we conclude, we must be permitted to give our readers the benefit of a translation of the scrap of Latin with which the reviewer concludes his lucubration, to convince him that we have not been wholly unmindful of his advice in "meditating a little upon the aphorism of the great English philosopher,"—namely, *Bacon*, the father of that inductive reasoning which has its foundation in facts clearly ascertained either by our own experience and observation, by the acknowledged laws which the Creator hath established as immutable, or by the unquestionable testimony of credible witnesses—a mode of reasoning this, we beg leave to remind the reviewer, which Wesley himself so successfully adopted in the sermons before us—for what does it all amount to but an evident demonstration of

that truth of God which the unerring Spirit *seals* upon the *conscience* of every true believer in Jesus Christ—and therefore may be *tested* just as evidently, by actual experiment, as any other truth of which we are conscious?

The following is the passage alluded to, and which the reviewer quoted for our especial benefit:—

“The images and false notions which now occupy the human intellect, and closely adhere to it, not only so enthrall the minds of men as to render the approach of truth difficult, but even when access is obtained, they will again arise and be a source of difficulty in the very commencement of the sciences, unless men, being forewarned, fortify themselves, as much as may be, against them.”*

And what, indeed, can remove those “false notions” which are engendered in the minds of the unregenerate, but that eternal Spirit of truth which “shines into our hearts, to give us the knowledge of the glory of God, shining in the face of Jesus Christ?” What renders the approaches of this Spirit of truth more difficult than that false philosophy which teaches that a man may become religious by the “proper cultivation of human nature,” independently of the Divine Spirit? So closely do these images and false notions of religion “adhere” to many persons, that they will fly directly in the face of the plainest declarations of Scripture, falsify their own standards of faith, contradict their most eminent theological writers, and contravene the laws of the “Spirit of life in Christ Jesus,” rather than relinquish them. Of the tenacity with which these floating images are held, in defiance of Scripture testimony and Christian experience, we have a lamentable instance before us, in the theory of our reviewer—a writer whose talents for investigation, had he adopted the inductive method of his author last quoted, by building his theory upon the established principles of the Gospel, would have enabled him to come to the sound conclusion, so often authorized in the sacred Scriptures, that “he that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself,” and that “a good tree (only) will bring forth good fruit.”

Thanking him, therefore, for directing our attention to an aphorism of such weight, and so necessary to be heeded in all our investigations of truth, we will remind him of another, no less important to be observed for the stability of our principles and the comfort of our hearts;—“To the law and the testimony; if they speak not according to these words, it is because there is no light in them;” a Divine aphorism this, to which our reviewer seems to have paid too little attention.

But it is time to bring this long article to a close. The importance of the subject must be our apology for its length. Our only hope of its being useful is founded upon the belief that he who “maketh the light to shine out of darkness,” can make even this imperfect attempt to rescue what we consider a vital doctrine of the Christian Church from the hands of its assailants, a means of enlightening the mind of the reader.

* See the original quotation in a note to the strictures which follow this article.

✍ The following strictures, referred to in the note on p. 263, were submitted to the writer of this article, after he had proceeded that far in the discussion of this subject. As they handle some topics not so particularly examined in the foregoing remarks, they are recommended to the serious consideration of the reader, provided the editors shall deem them of sufficient importance to insert them. They will at least serve to show that two different writers, who had no personal intercourse together, in reference to the subject, while they think much alike as to the truth and religious tendency of the reviewer's objections to Mr. Wesley's doctrine, may take somewhat different methods to expose his mistakes and to establish the truth. Indeed, the particular tenet, contended for in these sheets, cannot be too strongly fortified by Scripture testimony and logical deductions, because it forms, in our estimation, the very quintessence of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Never, therefore, did the pen of Wesley touch upon a more vital subject than this. It is, indeed, this truth which illuminates the whole horizon of Gospel doctrine. Like the sun in the firmament, which diffuses his beams on all the planets of the solar system, it sends forth its light and heat to the most distant parts of the moral and intellectual world. We are extremely jealous, therefore, of every one who would attempt to intercept its rays by the clouds of error and the dust of human speculations, or to eclipse its brighter glories by the eccentricities of earthly passions and carnal reasonings. Hence we hail with delight every auxiliary aid to keep the spiritual horizon clear even from every spot, that might, in any measure, intercept the rays of this luminous truth of Divine revelation. For "as the lightning shineth from one end of the heavens unto the other," so does the Spirit of God illuminate every page of inspiration, irradiate every one of the doctrines of God our Saviour, and make manifest the hidden things of darkness, to the consciences of the ungodly, as well as cheer and animate the heart of every true believer, making his "path to shine brighter and brighter unto the perfect day."

MESSRS. EDITORS,—In the last number of the New-Haven Christian Spectator, is contained a brief article upon the doctrine of the Witness of the Spirit, as taught by the venerable founder of Methodism. The article, of course, (almost,) is hostile to the doctrine; and as the objections urged by the writer are, in some respects, plausible, and well adapted to lay hold of popular impressions, while the doctrine impugned is a highly important one, I have thought the article in question worthy of notice.

The following strictures, if you concur with me in supposing the article of the Christian Spectator worthy of notice, are at your service. Yours respectfully,
W.

In several respects the article of the Christian Spectator is matter of gratulation. Taken in connection with other portions of the same publication, it affords proof that Methodist writings are deemed worthy of perusal and critical examination. And even if in the

examination we did not discover that freedom from bias which we would desire, still we are glad that our brethren of other Churches at length do us the justice no longer to study our history in the narratives of those who mostly did not know, and when they knew, did not appreciate us; nor our doctrines in the representations of those who studied only to caricature them. Wesley, and Clarke, and Watson, are read. We may therefore expect that their light will be more widely diffused to the no small benefit of others. With our progress in this respect, we are so well satisfied, as to feel no wish, much less *expectation*, that our brethren should believe in the "infallibility" of those illustrious men, any more than they do in "that of the pope."

In the article alluded to, there is an effort (and we trust an honest one) to render honor to whom honor is due, in paying to Mr. Wesley the respect due to his unparalleled labors for the salvation of men. We will not delay to notice, particularly, the sinister cast which is given to the remarks of the writer on this head, by his styling Mr. Wesley a mystic—"one who is destitute of that essential requisite to Christian experience which the apostle calls a *sound mind*,"—by speaking of the *sane* as well as *insane* expression of his character, &c. This language must go for what it is worth. The followers of Mr. Wesley have not learned to display any such superfluous humility as would be shown in an effort to defend him from the charge of insanity or mysticism, either generally or in any particular case.—Neither we ourselves, nor Methodists generally, have ever affirmed either that Mr. Wesley never *did*, or that he never *could* mistake. Yet, we have no hesitancy to believe that the Christian Church, in all her generations, has not presented to the world a man in whom, more than in him, piety was elevated by intellectual greatness, or intelligence sanctified by piety.

However, there is quite an unpleasant vein of self-confidence pervading the article on which we are remarking. Not of confidence in the writer's opinion, nor in the strength of his arguments;—but confidence in himself. Did the writer fancy that Methodists alone are exposed to bias, so that they *only* need instruction from the aphorism of Bacon, quoted below? * If we, in receiving a doctrine, may be warped by prejudice, may not he in judging it?

An ingenious examiner, we fancy, would find it more easy to show that Presbyterian writers had given difficult access to certain truths coming from the lips of Methodists, and rough treatment after they were admitted, than the contrary. †

Let us recur, however, to the proper subject of the article. The Spectator proposes for examination Mr. Wesley's doctrine of the Witness of the Spirit. Its effort is, 1. To present the doctrine. 2. To propose objections; though statement and objection are very much intermingled.

* "Idola et notiones falsæ quæ intellectum humanum jam occuparent, atque in eo alte hærent, non solum mentes hominum ita obsident sit veritati aditus difficilis pateat; sed etiam dato aditu et concessio, illa surors in issa instantatione scientiarum occurrent et molesta erunt, nisi homines præmoniti, adversus eas se, quantum fieri poteat, numiant."

† It is said, upon good authority, that a sermon on Perfection (and strongly in favor of it) has lately been preached in a Presbyterian pulpit, not very far from New-York.

Mr. Wesley maintained it as a doctrine of Scripture that the children of God know themselves to be such by Divine assurance of the fact. The terms which designate the doctrine,—witness of the Spirit—summarily present to us the communicating Agent, and all that Mr. Wesley undertook to affirm of the mode of communication. The Spirit of God is the agent; the spirit of man receives the communication; and for the “mode,” (if that term have any meaning in this connection,) it is in the manner of one who has the means of knowing a fact conveying information of it to another who has not the means. It is testimony. The doctrine of Mr. Wesley is founded upon the following passage:—“The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirits that we are the children of God,” Rom. viii, 16.

The Spectator is right, therefore, in saying that Mr. Wesley regarded this communication as a revelation. If revelation be a supernatural Divine communication of truth—and if the knowledge of the spiritual estate of God’s people be by direct communication from the Divine Spirit—then certainly this knowledge is by revelation. But when the writer goes on to say that according to Mr. Wesley, the Holy Ghost communicates with the soul by sensible approaches or impressions, the language would seem to need some qualification to be true. Does the writer mean by sensible approaches simply that the mind distinctly perceives the truth communicated—as distinctly as it perceives the sensations caused by the presence of outward things to the senses?—And is this all he *does* mean? If so, we will not delay upon it. Yet, it must be remarked, that the discussion here is respecting the fact, and (in a restricted sense) the *mode* of communication from *Spirit* to *spirit*,—from the Spirit of God to the soul of man. Hence, though Mr. Wesley uses the word *impression*, we are not to imagine an impulse analogous to that which is made upon the brain in sensation; nor when he speaks of the *voice* of God, are we to fancy *audible sounds*. These are only terms derived from sensible things, and applied to spiritual to give steadiness, it may be, but not reality to our conceptions. The language of Mr. Wesley does not even imply that the soul is *sensible* of the presence of the Divine Spirit, except by the communication. I think that here the writer before us misconstrued the language of the sermons, for so much mistake seems apparent in what he says. The communication reveals at once its author; but the soul of man seems to be endued with no intuitive or direct perception of other spirits.

The *fact* of the communication, Mr. Wesley affirms upon what he supposes to be scriptural authority. The *mode* even of that fact, he does not attempt to explain, unless a denial of the necessity of explanation be itself explanation. He says it cannot be explained; but the individual to whom the communication is made is assured it is from God.

The following quotations from the sermons, present this point in the clearest possible light:—

“By the testimony of the Spirit, I mean, an inward impression on the soul, whereby the Spirit of God immediately and directly witnesses to my spirit, that I am a child of God.”

“Meantime, let it be observed, I do not mean hereby that the Spirit of God testifies this *by any outward voice*; no, nor always by

an *inward voice*, although he may do this sometimes. Neither do I suppose he always applies to the heart (though he often may) one or more texts of Scripture. But, he so works upon the soul, by his immediate influence, and by a strong, though inexplicable, operation, that the stormy wind and troubled waves subside, and there is a sweet calm; the heart resting in the arms of Jesus, and the sinner being clearly satisfied that God is reconciled—that all his iniquities are forgiven, and his sins covered.”

If, then, Mr. Wesley attempts no explanation of this fact, much less does he attempt an explanation of the mode of regeneration. How the writer in the *Spectator* could confound (as he does) regeneration with the means by which the regenerate know themselves to be such, is sufficiently inconceivable; but that he should mistake Mr. Wesley's remarks for an attempt to explain the “modus” of regeneration, when it is not even an attempt to explain the “modus” of the witness itself, is past solution. Did he criticise Mr. Wesley without having read him?

The method in which Mr. Wesley's Scripture proofs are disposed of, is peculiar. The passage on which the doctrine is founded, is Rom. viii, 16. *The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit that that we are the children of God.*

Whatever farther investigation may be affirmed to show, it must be admitted that the obvious sense of the passage—that which would strike an intelligent reader of the Bible, unbiassed by theory, attending to the general sense of words—is, that the Holy Spirit communicates with the souls of believers, bearing testimony that they are recognized by God as members of his family. How, then, is this obvious sense of the passage set aside?

First, says the *Spectator*, the term spirit, it is well known, is used in this chapter in a somewhat indeterminate sense. But is it? And if it be, in some places, what then? Whatever may be the occasional sense of the term, in the majority of instances, and those in connection with the passage under consideration, it unquestionably means the third person of the blessed Trinity. See verses 9, 11, 13, and 14. And if it be used in this sense in so many passages, the fair presumption is, that this is its sense in those passages in which another meaning cannot be proved. Let it be observed, too, that the passages referred to, inform us that the Spirit of God dwells in God's children, see ver. 11,—that such are led by the Divine Spirit, ver. 14. By the Spirit of God dwelling in God's children, the apostle clearly means, making a manifestation of himself—a *friendly* manifestation; for, in any other sense, he dwells every where. Let it be observed farther, that the Spirit of God, the Spirit of Christ,* and Christ, are the same person, see verses 9, 10, and 11. Let the order of the ideas be next considered. The apostle having stated that the Spirit of God, which is the Spirit of God's Son, dwells in believers, in the sense explained, and that such are led by him, proceeds in the 15th verse to state, that believers have received the Spirit of adoption, by which they cry, Abba, Father. But the Spirit of adoption is the Spirit of Christ, which is the Eternal Spirit, as is proved by Gal. iv, 6, “And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the

* Some persons understand by this expression in verse 9, the temper of Christ. The context proves them mistaken.

Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father." Next comes our text, "The Spirit itself beareth witness," &c. Could any one who had no previous opinion think, in reading this verse, of any other spirit than that same of which the apostle had been previously speaking? I am sure not.

The Spectator next makes the extraordinary remark, that "in the 16th verse the apostle merely states a fact; while Mr. Wesley unfolds and defends his theory, as that fact." Now, pray, what is the fact stated "in the 16th verse?" And what is the theory which Mr. Wesley unfolds and defends as that fact? Is not the *fact* that the Spirit beareth witness? And is not the *theory* the very same? Mr. Wesley's doctrine, dignified in the Spectator with the name of a theory, is neither more nor less than a paraphrastic rendering into English of that simple statement of fact, contained in the 16th verse. Properly speaking, Mr. Wesley advances no theory. Yet, upon the supposition of a theory, the Spectator founds several learned and pious lamentations upon the deplorable influence of theorizing upon the Church of God. While we concur in these lamentations, so far as they are brought to bear upon attempts actually made to reduce revealed truth into apparent consistency with human speculations, we cannot consent either that the doctrines of Scripture, or the principles necessarily and inseparably connected with them, shall be driven from the world, under the name of theories. Notwithstanding the learning and research of our Presbyterian brethren, we apprehend their subtle method of severing facts from theories is but lately learned. Their metaphysical edge had tried itself often upon the effort to prove that God's foreordination of *all* things does not include *some* things—that the *inevitableness* of damnation to the reprobate, does not prove that they may not be saved, *if they will*—ere it became keen enough to sever the simple scriptural "statement of fact," that the Spirit beareth witness, from Mr. Wesley's "theory," that the Holy Ghost beareth testimony. This is neologistic tact. Does a New-Divinity man wish to deny a doctrine? He pronounces it a theory. The Bible contains nothing but facts, one would think; and, for doctrines they are to be ranked among philosophic theories. They may understand, however, that when the matter of fact (as *they* term it) is a Divine explanation of a *mode*, it is not to be got rid of by calling it a theory. We have in Scripture the fact, that some men are the children of God. Being such, they need to know it. *How*, then, shall they know it? What is the *mode*? The "simple statement of fact in the 16th verse" is a Divine *theory* touching the *mode*: "The Spirit itself beareth witness," &c.

If, then, Rom. viii, 16, bear upon its front an unequivocal declaration of the fact or doctrine of a Divine testimony in the hearts of believers, we may consider whether there be not another passage of Scripture, which, while it repeats the *simple statement of fact*, gives also some insight into the mode.

We follow Mr. Wesley in referring to Gal. iv, 6, "And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father."

Here is the same cry which is spoken of Rom. viii, 15. Only, that whereas in Romans, the cry is uttered by the believer, here it is

uttered by the Spirit. Manifestly by the believer, at the impulse of the Spirit—by the Spirit, through the believer. This makes no difference in the fact; but sheds some light on the mode.

Mr. Wesley has remarked, (as already quoted,) that the Spirit does not always communicate its testimony by a voice, either inward or outward. We should infer as much from this passage. This is the theory, verified by experience. The penitent suddenly believes in Christ. And suddenly all is changed. From cries of anguish, from sense of guilt, from fear of wrath, from imploring pardon, he feels no guilt, he dreads no wrath, he implores not pardon; but, under the overpowering influence of his heart, he cries aloud, Abba, Father. This cry is accompanied by the sweeping away of all (for the time) that contradicts the cry. The various sensations described, the pangs of remorse, the view of God as a stern judge, these are gone. Christ is precious, and he wonders that he did not trust in him; God is lovely, and he wonders that he had not loved him before; his heart is filled with child-like simplicity, with confiding affection; there is an irresistible persuasion, which if doubted will yet return, that God is reconciled. And, as the assurance beats down all demurring, he cries, Abba, Father. This is the Spirit of adoption, by which *he* cries; it is the Spirit of Christ *itself crying*. In many cases, doubtless, (perhaps in all at the commencement of religious experience, or rather at that stage of it when they enter into the light and liberty of God's children,) a simple state of mind, like the child's conviction of his own identity. Ask him (the child) if he is conscious of his own identity,—he does not comprehend you. Perhaps if you persist in explaining terms, and asking proofs you will make him doubt at last, whether he be the same—the *very* same—he was yesterday. Nevertheless, he acts, (not thinks, nor feels)—he acts that he is the same. So with the babe in Christ. He acts out, with his very heart, in his inmost soul, that God is his Father.

We have now finished what may properly be called the statement of the doctrine. From this, I think it will appear, that the writer in the Spectator has not gained as accurate a notion of what Mr. Wesley meant by the doctrine in question, as might be gathered from the sermons of that venerated man. We have also considered, in some degree, the scriptural language in reference to the subject.

In connection with the direct witness of the Divine Spirit, Mr. Wesley taught the necessity of a resort to the testimony of conscience—to an examination of our tempers and conduct. This testimony he calls a test of the former.

In referring us to conscience, Mr. Wesley so evidently has the support of Scripture, that no argument is needful. Nor does the Spectator question the propriety of such a reference; but, only its consistency with the admission of the more authoritative and infallible testimony of the Divine Spirit. It is to be considered, however, in the first place, What is a test? If I mistake not, its object is to detect, not soundness, but unsoundness. Proof, as well as testimony, is of two kinds,—negative and positive. In other words, before receiving a doctrine, we may inquire, whether its falsity cannot be shown from other doctrines. If it can, this is proof of its falsity; but, if it cannot, it is *negative* proof of its truth. So with testimony.

If the assertion be that a certain person was in a certain place, we may, without asking whether he *was* seen *there*, inquire if he were *not* seen *elsewhere*. If he were not, this is negative proof, that he was where he was affirmed to be. So to vary the language, negative evidence is that which refutes evidence leading to a contrary conclusion: Negative proof is that refuting an assertion which implies something contrary to the one which is intended to be proved.

Whether Mr. Wesley formally states this as the relation sustained by conscience, to the assertion made by one, respecting himself, that he is a child of God, I do not remember. That this is his view, I think is shown by his use of the word *test*. When we determine the truth of any assertion, by inquiring into the existence of certain circumstances, which *would* show themselves if the assertion were true, this is a test. If a man be a child of God, he will love him. Loving God is, therefore, a test of his filiation.

Beside, a test measures degrees. By direct testimony we may know whether an individual was present in a certain place, at a certain time. But if he were seen elsewhere, just before, and elsewhere again, just after, he must have been present at the place specified but a short time. I do not vouch for the precise accuracy of the illustration, but the truth of what is stated can easily be seen. That a man is adopted into God's family, proves him born again, or regenerate: but, it is no measure of the degree of his love, faith, hope, joy, &c. This measure can only be found in his feelings and conduct.

The secondary testimony of conscience may, therefore, be of great use, even to him who has the witness of God's Spirit. 1. In preparing him to give a ready reception to the Divine testimony, by refuting the doubting cavils of his own heart, as well as the subtle insinuations of the devil. 2. By furnishing him with a measure of his advancement.

We believe each of these witnesses has its place; and that the presence of one, *in its province*, will by no means excuse the absence of the other from *its province*.

Other illustrations, beside those already given, readily present themselves. Does not he who has faith know it; and by the best possible means, viz. consciousness? * Why, then, do the Scriptures refer us to outward works as an evidence of our faith? Doubtless the Spectator and Mr. Wesley would answer, that it is for some such purpose as this: 1. That faith may not degenerate into sentimentalism: 2. That faith may have a suitable measure.

So of love. Does not the man who loves God know it? Why is he then taught to test his love to God, by his love to the brethren?

The Scriptures do not classify proofs, saying, this is primary, that is secondary. They tell us what are proofs, and expect us to believe them, whether we comprehend them or not. But when an objection is advanced against proofs, which is real, while those proofs are supposed to hold a certain relation, we may very pro-

* I do not here proceed upon that strange conceit, that faith is a "self-evident" principle. When a sacred writer says, "He that believeth hath the witness in himself," I suppose him to mean, that a lively faith is accompanied by a Divine testimony.

perly consider them as holding some different relation, in which they may maintain their consistency. Proceeding upon this principle, we suppose that in appealing to conscience for a knowledge of our state, the question is not, How shall he who has the witness of the Spirit know it? he knows it by itself: but, How shall he who fancies he has it, when he has it not,—how shall *he* know that his fancy *is* fancy? Evidently, by conscience.

We say that we are assured of the existence of those things which are revealed to us by sight. We need no other testimony. Shall we hence infer that there is no need of a consultation of the senses? Shall a man in the jaundice affirm that all things are yellow, and refuse to be convinced because sight furnishes testimony of the highest possible kind?

The case to which the Spectator refers makes nothing for his argument. The case referred to is introduced by the writer, in illustration of a strange remark, that in those cases in which the fruits of the Holy Spirit and a holy life present themselves, the power of the test to detect delusion is gone. I suppose the writer means about this:—An individual has what Mr. Wesley styles the witness of the Spirit. He has also the test,—a good conscience. Now, complains the Spectator, in this case, the test cannot detect any delusion. He speaks truly. Conscience here detects no delusion. And for the best of reasons,—there *is* none.

This writer is deceived by his own prepossessions. He assumes there is delusion, and then complains that it cannot be detected.

The case is this:—A certain female, (subject to nervous irregularity,) was seized with conviction, and brought to cry, with a feeling heart, "What must I do to be saved?" In this state she continued for ten days. At the end of which, as she was lying down, revolving anxiously her situation, the room where she was, was suddenly filled with light, and a voice came to her, assuring her, that her sins were forgiven; and immediately filled with a rapturous conviction of her acceptance with God, she rushed forth, to inform others what great things the Lord had done for her.

Now, the Spectator supposes this to have been *mere* delusion, and then complains that the test was incapable of detecting it; for, all the fruits of the Spirit followed. In the language of the writer himself, "until her death she was one of the most devotedly pious members of the Church where she lived." And now, because where there *was* no delusion, (none to affect the argument,) the test shows none, therefore the test is nothing worth. The fault of the writer lies in assuming the point in dispute, that there was delusion; for of that there is no proof. Nay, the proof is the other way.

When an individual professes to know something which we have not the means of knowing, and which we therefore disbelieve, but which yet proves to be fact, the natural conclusion is, that that other individual has some means of knowing the fact, not accessible to us.

This principle will oblige us to admit that the person in question was, by some means, furnished with the knowledge of her adoption. For, 1. She was adopted, as the Spectator admits. 2. She was adopted *at that time*; for then she began to walk in newness of

life. 3. *At that time* she came to the knowledge of her adoption. She must therefore have had some means of knowing.

Let us now turn to another part of the article.

It is made matter of objection that Mr. Wesley should consider this Divine evidence of our adoption a necessary preparation to the exercise of love to God. "This impression precedes holiness in the sinner's heart." In support of his view on this point, Mr. Wesley quotes John; We love Him, because He first loved us.

Mr. Wesley's argument stands thus. He is refuting the opinion of those who refer the Christian for the evidence of his state to the fruits of the Spirit only. Their assertion is, We may know ourselves children of God, by our loving him. Mr. Wesley replies, We love him only by knowing we are his children.

In other words, we are not to refer primarily to the fruits of the Spirit, in order to evince an adoption; because these fruits presuppose not only the fact, but our *knowledge* of the fact that we are adopted.

At this opinion, as stated by Mr. Wesley, the Spectator is amazed. "What!" say they, "cannot love God—cannot know—cannot believe the love of God, until visited by inspiration!" However, the latter part of the exclamation is superfluous. Mr. Wesley's opinion is that we cannot *love God* (with a filial love) until we know that God, for Christ's sake, hath pardoned our sins. The term *inspiration* is equivocal and may convey a false idea. As to believing the love of God, in one sense we may, without being born again.

One remark may be worth making now. That is, that neither of this passage, nor of the two very prominent passages already quoted, the one from Romans the other from Galatians, does the Spectator offer any explanation. The position of the writer is that of an objector, who pulls down without building up; who refutes without proving. Neither does he advance any contradictory passage. His objections are merely metaphysical, or theoretic. This does not comport so well as might be wished with his own remarks already noticed. However, let us proceed.

Our remarks multiply, and we must needs be brief. It is not questioned but that one may comprehend the fact that God loved us, and that Christ died for us, without being born again. But can we exercise the love of children,—filial love,—till we recognize our parent? For it is of this filial love the apostle speaks; and this is correlative to God's paternal love. With this remark, we leave the topic, hoping that religious writers will bring religious opinions to the test of Scripture, and not to that of their own prepossessions, as is done by the writer before us.

If Mr. Wesley's system included much of what is called the *taste* scheme, those who think this a reproach should see that the "tastes" were different from those of the sacred writers, when they tell us to "*taste* and see that the Lord is good;" and speak of *tasting* of the heavenly gift, of the good word, and of the powers of the world to come.

We now come to the formal objections presented by the Spectator. We are sorry there should be any appearance of special pleading in these objections. Yet, I am greatly mistaken, if the

same metaphysical acumen which, "Can a hair divide, 'twixt north and north west side," have not magnified these objections from one into three.

1. Says the writer, "This doctrine must be regarded as an unwarranted fancy of mysticism."

In maintaining this position the critic runs into most absurd confusion, as will be seen upon comparing his statements. For, 1. "There are evidences of regeneration, and every converted person may be assured of his conversion." And yet, 2. "Regeneration evidences itself—to talk of its evidences, as something apart from its nature, is to use language without precision." "If regeneration takes place in our hearts, we are capable of perceiving it, just as we perceive any other change of character." But, 3. "Our exercises are the offspring, not of an undefinable 'gracious ability,' but of our moral agency; we produce them voluntarily; of course they come under our notice, and we may have a distinct and accurate consciousness of our moral state." But, 4. "In arriving at a knowledge of his state, it is of the first consequence for him (the regenerate person) to know, that by exciting his feelings and analyzing his impulses, he will not only retard his progress, but blind and delude himself." And yet, alas! 5. "His great inquiry should be, Have I a Christian temper? Have I ceased to do evil, and learned to do well?"

Before noticing the utter variance between these sentences and truth, as well as their utter variance the one with the other, we may make a remark or two respecting their congruity with the creed which the author of them professes to believe.

According to that creed, repentance and faith are fruits, and so evidences of regeneration. But, here it is represented that we are directly sensible of our regeneration. Are the elect, then, "conscious" of their regeneration before they repent and believe? Are they absolutely "assured" of it? The writer may well look to this; it is a new—new divinity. To return,—These broad assertions are utterly at variance, *First*, with truth and sound philosophy.

It is asserted that we may perceive that great change, called regeneration, just as we perceive any other change in our character.

Now it is a doctrine of intellectual philosophy,—and one fully sustained,—that the mind *itself* is not a subject of direct contemplation. This the writer will find clearly laid down by Mr. Upham, a philosopher of his own.

But if the mind itself cannot, neither can any change in its state, quality, condition, (or whatever term is to be used,) be *directly* contemplated. We know the mind by its operations—the heart by its affections. We know a change in the things themselves, by change in these.

How does the Spectator suppose that a man is aware of any change in his character? Is it by direct inspection of the soul? Surely not. Should an avaricious man become benevolent, would he know it in any other way, than by considering his feelings at the sight, on the one hand, of money, or of a prospect of gain, and on the other, of distress and want?

We do not therefore directly perceive these changes in our moral condition. The soul is not contemplated as a whole, so that we

can pronounce it good or evil, as we pronounce a mountain high or low—a house black or white.

It is not necessary to delay upon the neologistic science couched in the allusion to “gracious ability”—or to our “voluntary exercises.” Only let it be noted that those who are for putting down every doctrine that makes against them, by pronouncing it a theory, do not hesitate for a moment, to build whole systems of divinity, and to stake the salvation of all with whom they deal, upon the basis of metaphysical speculation. Of this there is enough visible in the subject of our remarks. The obvious sense of Rom. viii, 16 is, that the Divine Spirit bears witness with the spirit of believers. What but metaphysics can find any other interpretation?

Secondly, These assertions fight with one another. The sum of them is this. There are evidences of regeneration. These consist of our *voluntary* exercises—we produce them voluntarily. And yet it is of the first consequence for believers to know that by exciting their feelings, &c., they will blind and delude themselves. Yet, again, he is to solve the question respecting his spiritual state, by inquiring, Have I a Christian temper? Nay, it is not by a reference to his temper only, but to his acts also. Have I ceased to do evil and learned to do well?

If metaphysics can fabricate confusion worse confounded than this, why then our brethren of the Spectator, it is hoped, will secure a monopoly of the article.

1. The believer is directed, in seeking a knowledge of his case, to simple consciousness—he may contemplate the moral condition of his soul directly. In this stage of the inquiry, should one ask him, Have you the evidence of regeneration in the tempers of the heart? He would answer that he had a shorter way of coming at the truth—he had witnessed the change in his moral state, as it took place, and could see it yet. Nay, if thoroughly imbued, he would go on to note the delusiveness of any attempt to excite one’s feelings, and analyze impulses, and doubtless impress upon us the necessity of resorting to a direct inspection of the soul. But then, 2. The writer, as though he had forgotten, (or did not understand,) the import of his own expressions, does himself refer us to the state of our tempers for evidence of regeneration. “Have I a Christian temper?” “What are the exercises which I voluntarily produce?” In these expressions he must refer to tempers displayed in action—and voluntary exercises are those which flow from deliberate choice. The test then lies here; and yet this is that which his language has set aside.

We propose to the gentleman a dilemma. He may either admit the needlessness of this second test, in connection with the evidence of direct consciousness, or else admit the compatibility of resorting to conscience,* as a test in connection with the witness of the Spirit. Not that we admit the incompatibility in the one case to be the same as in the other. By no means. But he who withstands us, for introducing the testimony of conscience, in subordination to the

* The careful reader will doubtless observe that this term *conscience*, is not used in its usual restricted sense, throughout our remarks; but rather we use it to signify the knowledge we have of our feelings and affections by consciousness, as well as what we know of our outward conduct.

witness of the Spirit, should not combine things, which *really are*, as incongruous as *he thinks they are*.

But, 3. In the writer's system, we have not only to add to direct consciousness, an inferential process from active tempers, but must go farther. For yet it is asked, Have I ceased to do evil and learned to do well?

Let this suffice on that point. We grow both weary and wearisome.

The second objection of the Spectator is more like the former than the second to the first commandment. In truth, it is not like it; it is the same in a new array of words.

"The doctrine of these sermons is the same in principle with every extravagance of the wildest and most ardent form of mysticism."

The writer seems to think that because we admit an immediate testimony of the Divine Spirit to the souls of believers, therefore, whenever an individual professes to have received such a communication, we must believe him. In this he strangely forgets we have a test. By their fruits we shall know them. "No matter," it is said, "how preposterous, how amazing, &c., the enthusiast's account of his visions and voices, he is intrenched, and no expostulation can exorcise the insanity," &c.

The case of an individual giving an account of his visions and voices, is either that of the female before spoken of, in which, though the writer supposed delusion, yet he admitted he could prove none, by the case itself; or, it is a case in which facts contradict the account. In the former, the denial of the Divine testimony is a mere begging of the question. The examiner *assumes* delusion and then most preposterously complains there is no proof of it—in other words, that the person is deluded into truth. In the latter case, the delusion can be shown, and that is sufficient.

But how sadly this logic confounds prophets and apostles! They received the truth, by direct inspiration. Therefore, thinks the writer, no matter how preposterous the notion which an enthusiast may broach, he is intrenched beyond the reach of expostulation.

The third objection connects itself so closely with current views of the religious experience of Methodists that it deserves larger consideration than can be now given it.

"It gives an undue proportion to feeling in Christian character."

"Every philosophical observer, who examines with the Scriptures before him, fails not to perceive that whatever contributes to promote fitfulness in religion, promotes declension and insensibility."

It is against confounding the Spirit's influence with mere sensation, that we wish most carefully to guard. In reference to this, we have two points to make good. 1. That the testimony spoken of is entirely distinct from the feeling of him who receives it. 2. That the system of the reviewer is chargeable with a tendency to promote fitfulness much more than that which he attacks.

For the first:—It has often enough been taken for granted, that the testimony of the Spirit lies in certain feelings of gayety and animation, which many experience in times of devotion. Perhaps Methodists themselves have made the mistake as often as any.

But the feeling is not the testimony. It is the effect of it. A man,

oppressed with guilt and fear, appears at the throne of grace. There pleading the merits of Christ, he receives the assurance of forgiveness. This assurance is not joy; but a sinful man cannot receive it without being made joyful; and hence the feeling has often been confounded with its cause—the testimony. But that they are distinct will be manifest from this, that let him continue until the contrast of the passage from guilt to pardon is done away, and the extreme animation which he has, will subside into a tranquil serenity—a *sober* certainty of waking bliss.

True, others observing that this testimony is productive of joy, and that this joy is the manifestation of it, put on the joy without the testimony; as men often wear crape and sigh without being sorrowful. But their hearts confound them while they do it.

Feelings vary, but the testimony *need* not. In the midst of health, and friends, and prosperity of every kind, it speaks, but without flattery; upon the bed of sickness, in the hour of persecution, amid the loss of all things, it still speaks, and as before it did not flatter, so now it is not ashamed. The Lord knoweth them that are his, and recognizes them.

If the temperament of the man who receives it be gay and ardent, he will speak. If otherwise, perhaps he will not. If his physical state be such that he is susceptible of excitement, it will pour itself forth; otherwise not.

Let us propose a case, and examine the two systems upon it. An individual whom, but a moment ago, we saw groaning, weeping, confessing his sins and imploring pardon, suddenly, in the twinkling of an eye, dries up his tears, bewails no more (though he does not forget) his sins, but in fulness of joy gives glory to God, testifying to others how great things the Lord has done for him. I select, of course, an extreme case, the object being to discern the principle of it.

Suppose this person questioned. Upon our system, he answers, The Spirit itself beareth witness with my spirit, that I am a child of God. Now every one must perceive that this witness of which he speaks, is *not* a feeling of love, or joy; but it is the *cause* of these feelings. It is of course prior to them.

But let this individual have been informed that from his tempers, he must infer his state. Will he not set himself to work up his feelings—to subdue his remorse—to stimulate his love—to arouse emotion? I think this would be the natural result. Beside this, how full of calculation, of balancing of tempers, of casuistry and speculation, would he be!

This leads me to notice another phenomenon. Those who proceed upon the system of the writer, seem to show less feeling and fitfulness than those who proceed upon ours. Why? Because they are so occupied with the balancing of tempers spoken of, that they have no time for the display. But whether others will agree with me or not, I have no hesitancy to say, there is more fitfulness among persons of this class, than of the other.

Beside, times of excitement and again of freedom from it, prove one thing, i. e. sincerity. The feeling must be real. For, if factitious at one time, it could as well be created at another. It is true, that others, looking upon these persons, imagine that now the

excitement is gone, the religion is gone also. Perhaps the persons themselves, through lack of information, have the same view, which itself operates to destroy their religion. But it is not a matter of course, that now the excitement is gone, the religion must be gone also.

Who then is it, that judges by emotion and feeling? Which doctrine is calculated to promote fitfulness in religion? Who will awake feeling? He who depends upon feeling for an evidence of his acceptance, or he who does not?

Much more might be said; but these remarks are, even now, too much protracted.

Some one, perhaps, is ready to ask, Can he who has the witness of the Spirit, ever be in any doubt?

It is not affirmed, that *every* believer *always* has this Divine testimony. Nor is it always equally clear. The apostle who wrote under a plenary inspiration, was yet in one case led to say, *I think I have the Spirit of God*. How was the old prophet, mentioned 1 Kings xiii, deceived?

Ought not this doctrine to be oftener preached, and better understood?

THE PRESENT AGE.

Review of Harris' Prize Essay on Covetousness. By the Rev. ABEL STEVENS, of the Bennet-street Church, Boston.

MAMMON, or Covetousness the Sin of the Christian Church. By Rev. JOHN HARRIS, author of the "Great Teacher." Boston: Gould, Kendal & Lincoln. 1836.

THE current popular literature of the religious press is exceedingly prolific. At least it sustains well its ratio to the other departments of the literature of the age. Nor does it graduate lower on the scale of talent. If there is less of that robust thought and moral stamina which distinguish the earlier religious writers of the English language, there is at least, a delicacy of taste and a keenness of penetration, in later works, that render them better adapted to the peculiarities of the times. And indeed it is questionable, whether there is less of intellectual depth, of acumen, in the religious writings of the present day, than at an earlier period. The literary mannerisms of the day—the studied attention to embellish diction, may have led to the impression that such is the case. But if we are not much mistaken, a studious reader of the current religious writings, will form a very different estimate of their relative value. If the early English writers on Christianity dipped their pens in light, and wrote with simplicity and clearness for the head—it may perhaps be said that these sons have dipped theirs in fire, which both illuminates and burns; and has the double advantage of appealing alike to the understanding and the heart. The old colossal architecture of the Pharaohs may have passed away from practical use, and remains only in the pyramidal monuments it has left. But the less bold yet more beautiful, and sufficiently enduring models of Grecian art have taken its place.

Indeed the chief trait that can detract from the estimate of the present age, in the mind of one versed in its true character, is its prevailing self-distrust, and disposition to admit a disparaging comparison with former periods. It has come to be the cant lamentation of the times, that the good old stability of the days of the fathers has disappeared; and it is the imaginary apprehension of many, that a moral earthquake—an earthquake of wind—has fomented beneath the foundations of the whole social organization of the times—convulsing every thing into agitation, and threatening to confound all things in promiscuous ruin. These sensitive apprehenders of ideal dangers, would, like the South Americans, construct all the social fabrics of the age on a scale of diminutiveness, which shall admit of the least destruction in the event of an explosion of the concealed elements of ruin. But these sentiments are unworthy of the age which they would disparage, and the minds that entertain them are not specimens of the standard intellect of such an age; they are too far in its rear to form an adequate estimate of its real character; they are stunted by the limits of a comprehension too contracted to take in the colossal dimensions of its measures; they have never fully breathed in the spirit of emancipation and expansion with which it has quickened the world of thought. It is a magnificent period in which we live. One compared with which the venerated age which was its predecessor, was but a preliminary movement of time. An age of transition *from*, indeed, the strong primary formations, in the geology of the moral world, but *to* the higher strata which afford fertility, beauty, and the sustenance of life to its surface. It is an age which, if we may judge from significant indications, is itself preliminary to some grand epoch in human progress. One in which the accumulated energies of preceding times are condensed, as if for some momentous achievement, and the friends of man, instead of repining with morbid apprehensions for its erratic tendencies, should throw themselves, with grateful ardor, on its exigencies and turn them to good account.

We have asserted that the literature of the present age, though more brilliant is not less substantial than that of preceding periods; that it excels it in adding brilliancy to solidity. The age is eminently practical, but it is the tendency of practical habits to produce thoroughness and lead to new applications of truth. And has not the present age developed this tendency to a remarkable extent? What department of science has not received accessions and extended applications from it? The practical arts have been carried forward with a rapidity which one half of the preceding centuries combined did not equal; but the practical enterprise of the times has communicated its spirit to the intellectual and moral world. Every science has had its master minds within the present age; worthies, who, when the lapse of time shall attach to their names the venerableness of years, will stand in honorable comparison with their predecessors. Many of the natural sciences date their birth from the present age. The natural history of animated nature, in all its departments, botany, geology, mineralogy, and chemistry, in its present scientific form, are chiefly indebted to these reputedly superficial times, and Cuvier has just descended to his grave. Physical astronomy, especially, through the labors of the French,

has made important advances. The mixed mathematics have likewise received their share of the general progress of things ; and with the name of La Place is associated a rivalry with Newton, which posterity will yet be called upon to decide, and the sod is still fresh on his grave. The philosophy of mind, least congenial of all departments of science with an age of superficiality, has assumed its greatest glory from our times. The illustrious professors of Edinburgh were our cotemporaries ; and across the British channel Cousin still lectures with transcendent abilities, which, unless the superficiality of the age has made a profane mistake, have rendered him a successful competitor with Locke. Political economy, one of the most important of all sciences, is a product of our days, and the death of Say is still as recent in our memories as an event of yesterday. Legislation has made advances unequalled in the political history of the world ; and Jeremy Bentham, and Sir James Mackintosh died but a short time since, at a period when a constellation of intellects was extinguished which shone as resplendently as that of any other modern age. The scholarship of this age is not superficial. Profounder students, better thinkers, never lived than are to be found at the present moment in Europe, not only among the plodding and versatile minds of Germany, but even in la belle France. France, the very basis of whose very nationality has been supposed to be vivacity and superficiality, has produced the ablest mathematicians, and the most successful naturalists of modern times, and furnishes a demonstration, on a national scale, of the assertion we have made, that the supposed superficiality of the times is but the brilliancy which circles like a halo round the solid intellect of the age. The splendor of the sun is no argument against its solidity and magnitude, but invests it with new grandeur to our senses. And has not moral knowledge participated in the general progress of science ? Are not some of the ablest works of Biblical criticism of recent date ? When was philology, especially in its application to Scriptural exegesis, in a maturer state than it is at present, particularly in the universities of western Europe ? Ethical science has been undergoing important revisions. The Bridgewater treatises will be in future years proud monuments of the present times in natural theology. The publications of the age which are of a more practical and popular form, partake of the same common excellency. The writings of Hannah More will ever stand among the first productions of the female intellect. Robert Hall's writings are the most perfect models of style and elevated thought extant in our language. John Foster's unassuming essays will secure, by their powerful originality, a lasting popularity. The practical works of John Angel James will always be valuable. The theological writings of Richard Watson will be permanent standards. The small publications of Philip, of "Maberly chapel," are of a superior character. His *Manly Piety*, in its *Spirit, Principles, &c., &c.*, are gems in the literature of the Church. The writings of Chalmers will be the religious entertainment of men of intellect as long as religion and intellect are respected. The unostentatious author of the "*Natural History of Enthusiasm*," and of "*Saturday Evening*," deserves to stand among the first, if he is not the very first, of the moral writers of the age. His genius is of the

highest order, and corresponds better, in its vigorous, argumentative, and original powers in the discussion of moral subjects, with Butler's than that of any other writer extant; while a modern and classical style (somewhat elaborate indeed) gives him, in this respect, a superiority over Butler. His writings afford an interesting example of a philosophical mind of an eminent order, baptized with the very unction of the Christian spirit, and wielding its mighty powers in the defence of true religion. The author whose name stands at the head of this article, comes last, but he is not the least, among the ornaments of our religious literature. He has been favorably known to the reading community by a former work, "The Great Teacher," and will be still more highly appreciated for the present effusion of his pen.

The religious world has participated the same spirit which is vivifying with new life every other department of the interests of man. A spirit of renovation has gone through the Church, and the incubus of moral stupidity, which had repressed its energies for ages, has been thrown off. Methodism, which the more liberal opinion of another generation will acknowledge to have been a paramount agent of the times, has exerted its chief activity in our day. The whole circle of the Bible, Tract, Missionary and Temperance enterprises, originated with the generation now passing off the stage. And these great moral movements of the times, are yet in their incipient stages. They have indeed already kindled up beacon lights in the moral world, which send forth streams of radiance from its different outer positions until gleam begins to blend with gleam, and span its darkness with the streaks of dawning daylight. But they are only the first rays, the cheering aurora of the coming jubilee, the millennial epoch of the world.

One of the most important elements which has given activity to the present age, especially in its moral operations, is the *principle of Christian benevolence*. It is manifest that this is to be the dominant impulse of all the future movements and destinies of Christianity in the world. It is indeed the very genius of Christianity itself. It has always been more or less energetic in the whole of its history; but it has assumed, in the present age, a more practical embodiment. It is no longer an incidental matter, but is growing into an importance which will soon equal it to the financial systems of civil states. It is getting to be a great system of moral diplomacy in the religious world—the immense ground-work of all its interests and enterprises. We have not introduced to the attention of the reader, the eloquent and masterly work named at the head of this article, with the design of examining the critical character of it, but merely to make a passing reference to it, in order to recommend it to the Christian reader. We wish to treat on the corollary of the author's subject—not *covetousness* but *benevolence*. The work is a *prize essay*. A premium of 100 guineas was offered by John T. Conquest, Esq., M. D., F. L. S., for the best essay on the sin of covetousness. The Hon. and Rev. Baptiste W. Noel, and Rev. Dr. Pye Smith, were appointed the arbiters between the different competitors. The present essay was selected from among 143, which were submitted for examination. This fact will speak much for its character. The plan of the work is admirable. In the first part,

the author shows that *selfishness* is the antagonist of the whole economy of God's universe—a "frustration of the Divine plan"—that all sin is selfishness—that the Gospel is a grand system of benevolence designed to counteract this ruinous passion which has thrown the moral system of the world into rupture—and that selfishness has insinuated itself into the Church, and has been *the only successful impediment to its universal progress*. The second part is devoted to the proof of the fact that covetousness is the principal form of selfishness—"in its nature, forms, prevalence, disguises, tests, evils, doom, and pleas." The third part explains and enforces Christian liberality with an ardor, and an appeal, especially to the higher motives of evangelical Christianity, which no heart fervent with affection for the cross of Christ can resist. The style of the work is chastely simple, abounding in lucid figures and classical allusions, and bearing the marks of a perfect finish. We hesitate not to pronounce it, in our humble opinion, one of the most remarkable productions of the age.

We have pronounced with emphasis the assertion that *benevolence is to be the dominant impulse of all the future movements and destinies of Christianity*. We use the word, of course, in its pecuniary sense. It is manifest that there is no other principle on which the plans of Christian enterprise can be based. Religion is a voluntary matter, and never can be made compulsory, otherwise than by the compelling force of moral suasion, without losing its adaptation to man's moral constitution, and thus retard its own success. Even the state of public opinion, that would once tolerate the compulsory support of its domestic institutions, is fast passing away from the more enlightened communities of Christendom; and the Church at home, as well as in its projects of foreign extension, must soon rest entirely on the patronage of voluntary benevolence, in all the places where it has an enlightened prevalency. This is a happy indication. It does not imply a growing indifference to its high interests, but a growing appreciation of its own self-supporting energy, and the spread of more correct views respecting the means of its success. A religion which possessed inherent energy enough to work its early progress unassisted, through the crowded hosts of its first enemies,—that confounded the philosophy, overthrew the paganism, and cast down to the dust the thrones, and revolutionized the whole civil, social, and religious order that were contemporary with its infancy, and were venerable with centuries, when it put forth its first efforts,—such a system of truth, in an age like this, when it sits enthroned amid the liberty, the civilization, and the learning of the world, needs only to be let alone by civil powers, to show itself immortal and resistless. It is beautifully remarked by the author before us, that "It is clear that the entire economy of salvation, is constructed on the principle of restoring to the world the lost spirit of love; this is its boast and its glory. Its advent was an era in the universe. It was bringing to trial the relative strength of love and hatred: the darling principle of heaven and the great principle of all revolt and sin. It was confronting selfishness in its own native region with a system of benevolence, prepared as its avowed antagonist, by the hand of God itself. So that unless we would impugn the skill and power of its author, we must suppose

that it was studiously adapted for the lofty encounter. With this conviction, therefore, we would have been justified in saying, had we been placed in a situation to say it, "*Nothing* but the treachery of its friends can defeat it; if they attempt a compromise with the spirit of selfishness, there is every thing to fear; but let the heavenly system be worked fairly, and there is every thing to be expected. The triumph is certain."

And when in the hands of the apostles and their followers, the "heavenly system" was "worked fairly" did it not "triumph?" "When first put into operation did it discover any want of adaptation to its professed object? The recollection that God is its author, forbids the thought. It is *the wisdom of God*, and *the power of God*. But besides this, as if to anticipate the question, and suggest the only reply,—as if, in all ages, to agitate an inquiry into the *apparent* efficacy of the Gospel, and to flash conviction into the face of the Church, as often as the question is raised, *when first the Gospel commenced its career it triumphed in every place*. No form of selfishness could stand before it. It went forth from conquering to conquer. 'And all that believed were together; had all things common; and sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need.' * * * *

They felt the dignity and glory of their position, that they were constituted trustees for the world; exècutors of a Saviour, who had bequeathed happiness to man; guardians of the most sacred rights in the universe. In the execution of their task, death confronted them at every step; persecution, armed, brought out all its apparatus of terror and torture, and placed itself full in their path; but none of these things moved them; they scarcely saw them; they went on prosecuting their lofty work of making the world happy, for they were actuated by a love stronger than death. The world was taken by surprise—never before had it beheld such men—every thing gave way before them—city after city, and province after province capitulated—yet the whole secret of their power was *love*. Diversified as they were in mind, country, condition, age—one interest prevailed; one subject of emulation swallowed up every other—which should do most for the enlargement of the reign of love. A fire had been kindled in the earth which consumed the selfishness of men wherever it went."*

And would not the primeval triumphs of the truth be enacted over again before the world, if we could rouse the Church to a similar spirit of self-sacrifice, and embody its countless resources in enterprises of Christian love? Aye, could we not calculate upon a scene of moral triumph, even more transcendent? Is not the harvest riper now than it was in their day? Our facilities are a thousand fold more than theirs were. The strong ranks of the enemy which they had to meet, undaunted by any previous defeat, still recoil under the shock of their onset, and have fallen back from the contest; a little more energy would compel the world to capitulate. Every door is open. The summons "Come over and help us," coming from the north, the south, the east, and the west, reverberates through the world. The spirit of the age is in motion, carrying every thing before it, and opening up a high way over the earth for

* Pages 19, 20, 21.

the Church. The Church itself is rousing up, indeed, but it has not yet formed the true idea of what it must do before it can acquire the glory of subduing the world. It has its sentinels stationed on the outposts of the moral world; small detachments are moving here and there, to frontier contests, but, it must yet despatch its regiments of missionaries, and send forth its cargoes of Bibles, before it can witness very tangible results. All its energies must be consolidated in the effort, the trump of assembling must echo among its strong holds, an increased thrill of life and zeal must pervade its hosts, every lover of the cross must gird on the panoply of war, until there be produced a simultaneous rush to the scene of spiritual conflict, then may we expect that the work shall be done up, and the victory shout, "Alleluia, the Lord God omnipotent reigneth," shall roll over the world. It cannot be doubted that there are at present sufficient resources in the Christian Church, to complete the spread of Christianity, if they were but in active use. Does not, then, the responsibility of the present existence of paganism in the earth, lay at the door of the Church? And where is the individual member that can say he has acquitted himself from his integral share of the stupendous account?

But not only are the great movements of Christianity dependent upon the principle of benevolence, the same great moral element of the present age is destined to affect, materially, many of the social interests of the times.

The institutions of *education*, especially in our own country, are assuming more and more, a dependence upon voluntary support. Indeed it seems to be the tendency, in all places where Christianity has produced an advanced state of public improvement, to distinguish, as much as possible, between the political and secular interests of society, and those which relate particularly to its intellectual and moral well being, and to confide the latter to the fostering care of religion, and base them on the same principle of voluntary support. This circumstance does not arise from any management of the leading patrons of the Church: it is the spontaneous tendency of the public mind, when under high religious influence, and arises from the confidence which public opinion, when thus enlightened, reposes in the superior power of religion to sustain these interests.

The relief of poverty among the lower classes has become an interesting point of legislative deliberation in modern states, and forms an important problem in political economy. As society advances, the improvements of the mechanic arts reduce the employments of the poor. Christians anticipate a period of moral and social advancement, when all the distresses that now afflict humanity, will be measurably, if not entirely, remedied. But on what principle can the hope be founded, save that we are now contending for—the existence of an extended practical benevolence. The inequalities of human condition are inevitable under any form of society whatever. The violence of popular revolution might, indeed, level the distinctions of society; but it could be but momentary; and the causes of inequality would, sooner or later, obtain again the ascendant. While ever casualties are incident to human life, while ever it is possible for one man to enjoy better health or possess better capabilities than another, so long an unequal distribution of wealth must be insepa-

rable from any form of social organization. We would even say that, though God originated not the necessity of such a state of society, yet, in the present condition of things, it has become a part of the economy of his providence; and that all the afflictions of human life are graciously converted into means of moral discipline for us; and one most important object in this arrangement of Providence is, that improvement of our nature which is to be derived from the cultivation of benevolent habits—not only the disciplinary effects of suffering on its victim, but the effect of those habits of benevolence which his sufferings give occasion to on the part of the benefactor that relieves them. It is admitted that the nature of our present life is entirely probationary; that all its relations, and duties, and circumstances, are designed to be disciplinary of our moral nature, and to fit us for a higher sphere of being. If this is the object,—the ultimate object of all life,—even in its most insignificant duties, of how much importance in this moral discipline must be the noblest of all affections that can distinguish human nature.

These are some of the practical applications of the principle of benevolence, the principle which this magnificent age (as we have chosen to call it) has rendered the lever by which the machinery of the moral world is to be moved. But there are other views of the subject not less interesting. It is not only in its application to the moral exigencies of the times that this affection commends itself to our regard, but its salutary influence on our nature, already intimated, invests it with additional importance. While it is to *act* as the great instrument of the future achievements of the Church, and introduce its universal triumph, it is likewise to *react* and prepare it for the final conquest. We are convinced that the benevolence of the times has not been sufficiently appreciated in this respect.

Its influence is important on our *natural sympathies*. Dr. Paley remarks, (for he has thought the subject worthy of notice in a scientific treatise on moral philosophy,) that “they who rank pity among the original impulses of our nature, rightly contend that when it prompts to the relief of human misery it indicates the Divine intention and our duty. Indeed, the same conclusion is deducible from the existence of the passion, whatever account be given of its origin. Whether it be an instinct or a habit, it is, in fact, a property of our nature, appointed by God; and the final cause for which it was appointed was, to afford to the miserable, in the compassion of their fellow creatures, a remedy for those inequalities and distresses, which God foresaw that many must be exposed to under every general law for the distribution of property.” This sound and philosophical view of the subject applies equally to the more important case where our sympathies prompt to the melioration of the moral distresses of those who dwell in the “habitations of cruelty,” and whose spiritual necessities admit of no comparison with the merely physical privations of the poor. In referring the claims of benevolence to the “original impulses” of our nature, we do but place them upon the same basis on which the Creator has established the most important duties of life. It cannot have escaped the notice of the most casual observer of human nature, that the very first relative duties of man are primarily founded in the instincts and sympathies of his constitution. In what do his domestic relations originate?

What binds together the hearts of his family circle, and dictates the duties that pertain to that relation and harmonizes them with a concern which the minutest theoretical views of domestic life, framed into statute rules, never could produce? What is it that guides him in his social intercourses, that sanctifies the confidence of friendship, melts the ice of selfishness from around the heart, and sheds forth its sympathies in streams of love to others? What leads to the love of country, the passion upon which the interests of states depend? Legislatures may define for us our duties to the state, but which makes the best citizens, statute books and prison cells, or the influence of heart-felt patriotism? The instincts of the heart are paramount law here. Scripture and human laws may prescribe some general precepts respecting these duties, but it is manifest that God has seen fit to give them the securer protection of laws written on the mind, laws whose precepts are woven into the very texture of the heart. And how powerless, how chilling, would be all prescribed laws, regulating these relations, without the still stronger dictates of the heart. Social life would be reduced to a mere mechanical process, men would be converted into unfeeling automata, and the very fountain head of all earthly felicity would be stagnated and frozen into a mass of ice.

If, then, those duties which make up at once the chief relations and the chief happiness of human life, duties without which society would be a blank, and man a brute, are committed to the instinctive impulses of our nature, what inference must we draw respecting the obligation of benevolence, if that duty is equally founded in the same natural sympathies? And does not he who resists these impulses, when they respect the wants of the poor or the pagan, commit a transgression against the first laws of his nature, as much as if he should dry up the affections of his heart toward the helpless child in whose veins flows his own blood? He may not commit so great a sin, but does he not commit as real a one? Theft is not so extreme a crime as murder, but it is as really a sin, and the existence of murder in the world does not nullify the criminality of stealing. Is not, in other words, the practice of benevolence *a duty*? and may we not add the farther inquiry, whether we can ever presume on that state of moral and social elevation which we delight to contemplate as the coming jubilee of the Church and the world, until it is felt to be nothing less than an absolute duty? He that can turn the shivering orphan or the emaciated widow from his door,—the man that can pass the tottering beggar in the streets with a look of contempt for his rags,—rags that may be as honorable to him as the scars of a hero,—he that can resist the claims of those benevolent combinations which offer their services to relieve him of all the drudgery of his *duty*,—that man is erasing from the statute book of the heart a mandate which the finger of God has recorded there as truly as it inscribed the precepts of the awful decalogue. When shall the period, propitious for the Church and the world, arrive when the charities of the age shall be transferred from the frail support upon which they now rest, the mere enthusiasm of feeling, to the securer basis of a wide-spread and deeply-stamped sense of duty.

But, again, the fact we have illustrated, viz., that compassion for

the miserable, whether physically or morally such, has a common origin with the social affections and some of the best susceptibilities of our moral nature, proves that there is an important relation between them, and that any violence to those sympathies which God has endowed in our constitution, must extend its deteriorating effects to our whole social and moral nature. So true is this, in fact, that any man whose position in life renders him accessible to the common appeals of benevolence, if he habitually resist them, becomes marked by the perversion produced by such a habit. The reader does not know of a single individual, a member of a Christian Church, who declines an interest in its great charities, or if he gives, does it with constrained reluctance, who is not a living example of the position we have assumed.

It is in the universal principle of *sympathy* that all the duties which belong to our social nature are founded. However varied these duties may be, they are all modifications of the selfsame principle. When it is confined to the limits of those who are connected with us by the immediate ties of blood, we call it *domestic love*. When it extends its compass so as to take in those who are connected with us by neighborhood or the intercourses of society, we call it *social affection*. When it fixes our esteem upon, and reposes particular confidence in, an individual, we call it *friendship*. When called into exercise by national pride or national jealousy, we call it *patriotism*. When excited by the miseries of the poor, we call it *charity*; and when, unshackled by any local limitation, it becomes a sentiment of common interest for all men, we call it *philanthropy*. It is evident, therefore, that the cultivation of habits of benevolence is but the cultivation of the best, the most amiable affections of which we are susceptible.

Not only are some of the best affections of our social nature dependent upon the same principle to which we refer the claims of benevolence, but what is still more important, our moral susceptibilities grow out of that principle. Our moral improvement has more connection with the heart than it has with the understanding. A man may be a philosophical speculator in the theory of morals, and yet live in the practical neglect of all the knowledge of duty he possesses; while the individual whose untutored mind never traced out a single logical process on the doctrines of morality, may possess in his heart, and exemplify in his life, all its excellences.

The cultivation of our sympathies is, therefore, all important for the improvement of our moral nature. And we do not assert too much when we say that he who can wither up these sympathies in his bosom is seriously impairing his sense of the obligations of morality, and the solemnities of religion. If he can stifle the voice that speaks from within the sanctuary of his breast, he may soon be able to deafen his ears to that which speaks from heaven. If those benignant tendencies which bind him in common fellowship with his race, and which should make their sorrows his sorrows, and their joys his joys, are extinguished from his heart, so may be those higher tendencies which, ascending to other worlds, aspire to the fellowship of holier beings. What vice is there, under heaven or out of hell, that has so petrifying, so searing an influence on human nature as that to which we allude—the *sin of covetousness*? The

Scriptures assert it to be the *root of all evil*. "Gold," says the classical tragedian,

"—Gold is the worst of ills;
It taints the heart and turns the virtuous soul
To basest deeds—artificer of fraud
Supreme, and source of every wickedness."

Is the sentiment in Sophocles, "source of every wickedness," a plagiarism from the Scriptures, "root of all evil," interpolated by some monk, zealous for the truth, or is Scripture so true to nature, and nature so obvious, in this respect, to the most casual observation, that even a heathen poet could hit the truth with the exactness of inspiration? Covetousness is a vampire that sucks the blood out of the very heart. A man once smitten with it is struck with a moral paralysis, all his better sensibilities are nerveless ever afterward. He becomes a statue of ice, every thing he touches decays and dies, he sheds a death-chill on the atmosphere, wherever he goes. Selfishness, like a cold-blooded reptile, coils around his withered heart and feeds upon it. The miser! what is he? A body without a soul, galvanized into life only by the love of money. A unit among the millions of his race, and yet, dreary and solitary, without a sympathy to bind him to them. A drop in the rolling ocean, and yet frozen so hard that it cannot mix with the mass of waters. A man unhumanized. The image of God stamped on the brow of a *dæmon*! Humanity fallen to the dust, like an angel fallen from heaven!

But change the hideous picture, and contemplate its contrast. Reverse these repulsive traits, and you have the character of the philanthropist. There is no vampire drinking up the life blood of his heart, but its sympathies gush in a living stream like the current of the mountain spring, refreshing and gladdening every thing in its course, until it loses itself in the ocean of human sympathy that whelms the world. No moral paralysis deadens his sensibilities, but all are in lively tune and melodious concord, like the chords of an instrument, responding a tone of music to every touch. He is no statue of ice, chilling the atmosphere and breathing frost wherever he goes, but the ardor of a warm heart glows in every feature, irradiates his eye, kindles in his thoughts, and burns in his words. No cold-blooded reptile entwines his heart and consumes its sympathies, but it is the pure sanctuary of all holy affections, noble purposes, and high designs—sympathies pure and expanded like those that blend in fellowship the spirits of heaven, reside there. He is no body without a soul, but a soul that knows no limitations from bones and muscles,—no unit among the millions of his race, without congenial sympathy,—no drop in the ocean without affinity for the surrounding mass,—but his sympathies enlarge to a kind of infinity,—for such a man is godlike in this respect,—he resembles the Deity in a kind of omnipresence of sympathy, that makes the wide world his home, and every man his brother! It is a sober opinion that such a man—the Christian philanthropist—with a heart sanctified to God and devoted to the good of his fellow creatures, is the highest excellence to be found in our desolate world,—a living personification of the Christianity of the New Testament. It is refreshing

to the heart of a good man to meet with such a one, for he reflects the image of his Saviour.

And let it not be supposed that where the object assisted is a simple and unostentatious one, or the assistance rendered is from necessity limited, that these salutary effects will not follow, and the design of the assistance be not effected. The remarks of our Saviour on the widow's mite take out of the mouth of the miser such a pretext for his illiberality. Simplicity is an element both of beauty and sublimity, and modesty is a characteristic of true greatness. It is the weakness of our nature to be affected more by the casual and striking indications of things than by a sober estimate of their real importance. Our thoughts are stirred within us at the sight of the storm moving in the array of "clouds and darkness," with its lightnings and thunders, and obscuring the very sun in the firmament; but we seldom stop to think that those clouds, that move like dark battalions armed with the thunders of the storm, are but vapour which has arisen from the mountain rill, or been carried up on the breath of a sunny day, from the tranquil surface of the lake. We rarely reflect that all this meteoric tumult results simply in sprinkling drops which sustain the tender herb of the field and refresh the bloom of the loveliest flowers. The ocean is an object that strikes our attention, covering three-fourths of the surface of the world, filled with myriads of monsters, and lifting its ridges of liquid mountains to the clouds. But the ocean is but the vapour of the atmosphere condensed. And *vice versa*, we are apt to estimate of little value, things of humble appearance. But the twinkling stars that wave like expiring tapers among the shades of night are centres of planetary systems. A single grain of wheat could, in the course of years, cover the world with harvest, and supply all the millions of future generations with their bread, and, if it could have soil enough, would accumulate to a mass larger than all the worlds of heaven combined. There is much importance in little things.

Benevolence presents in beautiful exemplification the spirit of Christianity. Considered as an habitual virtue and a practical duty, it is peculiar to the Christian religion. The susceptibility is, no doubt, original in our constitution, and is but another form, as we have shown, of the same principle of sympathy which gives to human nature its social character; but, like all the other moral qualities of our nature that have survived the fall, though it may manifest itself under the form of the natural affections, it seldom, if ever, rises to the greatness of a disinterested and universal principle, except when expanded and sanctified by Christianity. We do not contend that the person who is not personally pious is incapable of true benevolence, but that even his benevolence is the result of at least that indirect influence which Christian institutions and Christian society sway over his natural sympathies. Paganism never produced an exhibition of it. Even in its most polished epochs, when it gave refinement to taste and perfection to art, when it assembled at its shrine all the glories of genius and the charms of literature, and decorated every scene of life with its classical embellishments, it never gave birth to a single institution of benevolence, much less incorporated it into its code as a practical duty. It gave triumphs to its heroes and commemorated the deeds of its great men. It glorified ambition,

gave splendor to power, and lavished dignities on the offices of political life; but it never could discover in the unostentatious pretensions of benevolence that true greatness which renders it the boast of the Christian Church, and in the magnificent enterprises it is now prosecuting, the glory of the Christian world, and the sublime instrument of the regeneration of our race.

Nor has philosophical skepticism manifested more congeniality with this noble virtue. The entirely negative character of infidelity,—its disposition to annihilate every thing, while it creates nothing,—to divest truth of all life and substance, and to reduce the virtues themselves to mere abstractions,—renders it the last soil for the charities of the human heart; a soil in which the rankest vices may luxuriate, but where the virtues droop and die, rather than beautify it with their loveliness. How pre-eminently does the Christian religion shine in the light of this single virtue! Independently of its great doctrinal truths, of the lofty motives it presents to the mind, and the vast range of moral contemplation and spiritual hope it opens before it, stretching even to the length and breadth of eternity, independently of these, or more properly, when we see it clothing these grander attributes in the meekness and simplicity of charity, and wending its way through the putrid alleys of the great city, into the filthy cellar or the shivering garret, and bending an angel of tenderness over the bed of loathsome disease, taking the orphan to its bosom, and pouring its consolations into the heart of the widow, how striking, when thus considered, is its contrast with that idolatry which exhausted its splendors on conquerors and statesmen, or that infidelity whose only virtue is that it delivers man from suffering by petrifying his sensibilities!

STRICTURES ON PROF. UPHAM'S PHILOSOPHICAL WORKS.

Elements of Mental Philosophy, by THOS. C. UPHAM, 2 vols. 8vo. Boston, 1833.—*A Treatise, Philosophical and Practical, on the Will*, by the same, 1 vol. 8vo. Portland, 1834.

BY REV. W. M'K. BANGS, A. M.

MENTAL philosophy, properly speaking, is the only universal science. It is at once parent and offspring. While a knowledge of its elementary principles seems absolutely essential to any successful effort of investigation, profound and wide spread investigation in the various departments of human knowledge is necessary to a full development of all its principles.

Owing, however, to various causes, it has been the last of the sciences to develope itself. The mind is seen only in its operations. Of course, before these can be observed, some other field of observation must have been provided. The attention must have been aroused to some internal object; and the powers have busied themselves upon it. By this means, the mind itself, as an object of contemplation, is necessarily thrown into the back ground. It is not an easy task at once to be intent upon an internal object and to watch the mind's operation. Beside, the power of abstraction—of dealing with pure intellection,—is the last to develope itself, both

in the individual and in the mass. Finally, the mind is too near to itself to be readily contemplated. We must look off, in order to look with ease. Hence but few extended observations have been made by an individual upon himself exclusively. The most useful and comprehensive are those in which rigid self scrutiny comes in to the aid of observation upon others.

While mental philosophy holds a common relation to all the sciences, there are certain important scientific arts which derive from it, in its full development, all their accuracy and value. Logic and education rest not upon the superficial knowledge of mind which will suffice for a starting point in the study of physics. They derive nearly all their principles from the science before us. Philology—the science and art of interpretation and expression,—is a shoot from this great stock,—a pillar supporting and supported in the great temple of sober metaphysics. Yet these are the great weapons of the ministry. Were the question propounded, to what science beside the Divine science, should an ambassador of Christ direct his most resolute efforts, we might answer, with all the energy of Demosthenes, *the science of mind*.

The age has not failed to appreciate it. As distinguished from the scholastic metaphysics, its importance is now understood, and the elementary knowledge of it is rendered as universal by means of colleges and academies, as that of the dead languages. In proportion, however, to the dependence placed upon it, must be the care with which its principles are developed. Nay, it is more true here than elsewhere, that it is better to say nothing than what is not correct. Intellectual philosophy is only description. The mental philosopher does not construct and invent; he sits and watches. The effect which he may expect to produce, is—not to re-create the mind,—but, to assist us in the management of it, such as it is. By describing it falsely he may lead us to obstruct its regular operation; while, by not describing it at all, he only compels us to leave it to itself; in which case, though it may at times go astray, or not reach its utmost elevation, it is contrary to all our notions of the goodness and wisdom of God to suppose it will go astray fatally. I am speaking now of the intellectual nature of man, apart from the moral. It may be objected to what is said, that the mind does go astray, and that fatally. But this is owing to moral derangement. Under the operation of a bad heart, man interferes with the operation of his own intellect,—an evil which it is not in the power of intellectual philosophy to remedy. But to suppose that the mind, when untrammelled by a will, either corrupt or misinformed, can go far astray in the field for which God designed it, is to reject all confidence in the Divine benignity. For this reason, it seems better to leave the mind undescribed, than to describe it badly.

The system of intellectual philosophy before us, may be said to be in very good repute. It is somewhat extensively used in our schools of learning, and seems to be almost the only American authority on the subject. It is the only work which professes to go over the entire field, and to give a clear and systematic view of the doctrines which have been established by full and careful examination. This seems to be the province of a work occupying the place of the present,—not to furnish disquisition on the topics com-

ing within the limits of the science,—but to present clearly such principles as have been established, and their demonstration. This, *in general*, is all that can properly be set before the mind of a learner. It is indeed true, that, in the present state of the science, it may be impossible to keep entirely clear of disputed points. But, where such topics are introduced, a distinction should be made. The pupil should know that such and such are debatable points; while others have attained the stability and clearness of scientific deductions. In treating of the will, it would have been more to the purpose to have given us a short account of the variant opinions of metaphysicians, than to have laid down the creed as resting upon the same foundations with the other doctrines of the book, with no note of difference; a creed, too, to be afterward greatly modified, if not cancelled, by its own author.

Professor Upham's work is, in most respects, highly deserving of its position. It is, perhaps, as *lucid* in its expositions, and as *simple* in its order, as a work on intellectual philosophy could be made. These qualities are highly important. No work devoid of them, however meritorious in other respects, would deserve the rank of a text book. The judgment with which the author has combined the views of the profound thinkers in this department of science,—the distinctness and simplicity with which he has arranged and expressed them,—are beyond praise.

Honest scrutiny, however, will do the work no injustice. There seem to me to be defects in it,—defects in important doctrine, and defects in particular passages. Especially, there is a great chain of topics running through the work which deserve investigation, both on account of their intrinsic importance, and of the author's manner of treating them. These, after some preliminary remarks, will occupy our attention exclusively.

We will not delay long upon mere peculiarities which do not affect any great point. There is a prolixity in some passages of which one would gladly be rid. There is also what seems to be an affectation of eloquence, which is quite misplaced. I do not mean of argumentative eloquence,—the eloquence of profound and comprehensive thought; this cannot be misplaced; but the eloquence of imagery.

Mr. Upham, however, does not generally err in this respect. It is referred to more for the sake of holding up an important principle than for the purpose of censure.

One great obstacle to a successful inquiry into the mental phenomena arises from the images of material things, almost inseparably connected with the language we are obliged to use. According to Mr. Stewart, an author quoted by Mr. Upham with great respect, the perfection of philosophical or rather of metaphysical language, lies in its suggesting no pictures of the kind referred to. Of course, we cannot at present reach an absolute perfection in this respect; yet we can approximate to it. There are not wanting men who aspire to the character of intellectual philosophers, and yet seem constantly reaching at some sparkling gem of fancy,—striving to present pictures to the eye, and musical sounds to the ear. Such men seem to consider mind a thing visible and audible. But from them no discovery can originate. The use of such forms of

expression indicates a mind resting upon opinions already laid down—upon analogies discovered. Almost every metaphor has some tendency to mislead—to divert the mind from straight forward investigation, by casual associations. There is an analogy of relation between mental and material things, upon which it is possible to base figurative expressions without misleading. But there is no great need of metaphors at all. Let the eloquence be that of exact discrimination and of precise expression,—that of one who loves truth,—can discern and forcibly declare it. With this the lovers of truth will be satisfied.

There appear to me to be some things objectionable in the account of the primary laws of belief. Is there not too much of an attempt to establish them by reasoning? Does not Mr. Upham seem to grant, that if we could not establish, we might reject them? That they are incapable of *real* confirmation is plain. The statements of the author forbid the supposition that he intended this; yet he has very nearly attempted it.

The principal use which can be made of these primary laws of belief is twofold:—1. To serve the purpose of description. They are parts of the mind. The description may serve the purpose of a test. One may determine by it, for himself, whether his mental processes are running wild or not. He can do the same by its aid for others. 2. By an accurate knowledge of them we are able to detect prejudices; for however firmly these may be wrought into the texture of the mind, they will be found at last to be lacking in the great characteristics of these primary laws. In order that they may serve this end, two things are necessary, neither of which does one find, to the extent desirable, in the work before us. These are, 1. The demonstration, from facts of the mental phenomena, that such and such are primary laws of belief. 2. The characteristics of a primary law of belief, clearly laid down, so as to distinguish it on the one hand from a self-evident truth, or on the other from a deeply-rooted prejudice.

There is one error which the study of mental philosophy has some tendency to produce, against which it may be worth while for an individual to be on his guard.

It has been already noted that mental philosophy is mere description. The philosopher describes taste as sensibility to the beautiful and the deformed:—informing us what objects gratify and what disgust it. Now, it is important that the description be so made, that the reader will not mistake *it* for his taste, and judge by it instead of his sensibility. Philosophers tell us that consciousness is a source of knowledge,—an infallible guide to truth of a certain kind. The danger is, that students will believe what consciousness testifies, not because it is true, but because philosophers regard consciousness as a source of knowledge. In other words, the philosopher tests consciousness; whereas, consciousness ought to test the philosopher. We are apt to depend upon the philosophy to sanction our nature; whereas, nature should be looked to to sanction the philosophy.

Perhaps the work under notice has not done all that was necessary to prevent this bad effect.

Let us now see whether there be not one of these laws which Mr. Upham has misunderstood. I refer to that which he entitles

belief in the uniformity of the laws of nature. I think this law is misstated, though I will not delay to correct the statement. It is sufficient for the present purpose that Mr. Upham has misunderstood, and therefore misapplied it.

A law is a rule of procedure. This is the basis of the idea, in all its modifications.

Physical laws—the laws of nature—are the rules by which natural events *are* governed. Moral laws are the rules by which rational, accountable beings *ought to govern themselves*. Human law specifies that which, by the determination of a competent authority, must be considered the *proper* rule of procedure, by those subject to the authority.

The subject here is physical law: using that term—*physical*—in its widest sense, as including whatever is subject to an unvarying and fore-appointed consecution. The laws of belief are not human laws; they are not moral: and, if beside these, there be any but physical, I am not aware of it.

Perhaps this is as proper a place as any to observe that the word *physical*, when applied to cause, is not synonymous with bodily. The laws by which one idea suggests another, or of association, are physical, though mental. Neither is it necessarily *opposed to voluntary*. So far as the will is subject to law, that law is physical, although the result of it be a voluntary operation. But of this hereafter.

Law is not to be defined a “mode of expression”—“denoting an order of sequence,” &c. (See Wayland's Moral Science.) It is an ideality, or pure mental conception. It implies, therefore, always, a mind conceiving, as well as a will governing; and in two of its forms, viz., moral and human, will governed; governed, however, by rewards and punishments, or by itself, in conformity to law. Whether the primary law of belief, above referred to, (of the uniformity of the laws of nature,) as expressed by Mr. Upham, throws any discredit upon the miracles of Christianity, needs not to be now considered. I do not intend to examine, in detail, our author's mode of presenting these, although I doubt whether any of them be *very* well described by him. The manner in which the one under consideration is appealed to, in the Essay on the Will, seems to render a brief remark or two reasonable. First of all, then, it appears to me not exactly proper to say that the law in question is of the *uniformity* of the laws of nature. I would rather say, it is the universal conviction that nature *is* governed by law,—not at random. It is difficult to determine how law can exist and not be uniform. I am inclined to think that we may seek in his faulty phraseology for the ground of the mistakes which Mr. Upham has made in his applications of this law.

The reader will please note the phraseology employed. The conviction is not, that nature *must be*, but that, she *is* governed by law. The Supreme might have done otherwise; and that, in particular cases, things have been governed by a rule, not inherent in their own nature, we have ample testimony. This conviction, in my view, is not a primary law of belief at all. It is a conclusion forced upon all minds, by *observation* of the fact, *that it is so*. It is, therefore, a conclusion, subject, in particular cases, to observation

and testimony, which is not the case with what is *properly* called a law of belief.

That this conviction, such as it is, has been misunderstood, and, therefore, misapplied, by Mr. Upham, I think will appear from the following remarks:—

Law is a rule of procedure, and is to be distinguished from the *result* of the process. Thus, it is a great law that the earth shall revolve around the sun, and around its own axis. This is the rule. The *result* is that we have summer and winter,—day and night. Mr. Upham's mistake lies in affirming the uniformity of the result, and not of the law. Now, the result may or may not be uniform. When the law operates *under the same circumstances*, this will be the case; otherwise, it will not.

The pertinency of the remark will be shown by a simple instance. If we infer the sun's rising from his having risen heretofore, by the aid of this law of belief, manifestly we must infer that he will rise at the same time, and in the same relative position as before. It is surprising that this mistake should occur in the same section in which it is rebuked. The case of the man who inferred that it would snow at Rome at the same season at which it had snowed repeatedly before, is precisely that of the man who infers the sun's rising to-morrow from his having risen to-day. This leads me to notice the fundamental error of both; which is the more important, as it seems to be a current error among the philosophic of the day.—See *Int. Phil.*, vol. i, p. 45.

It lies essentially in mistaking results for laws. Mr. Upham supposes the mistake lay in the individual's inferring from too small a number of facts. In a measure it did. Under certain circumstances, we have nothing on which to base an inference, but a multitude of results, or rather the same result, *often repeated*. But, in most cases of this kind, does not the error lie in inferring from the fact past, to the result future, *directly*? The process should be from the fact known, to infer the *law*; and, from the law, the result to come. The law, once seen, is a law, until superseded. And had the law been that it should snow, the man would have been justified in inferring, not only from its having snowed thrice, but, even from a single fall of snow. For a law, we need to see it once only, and it standeth sure for ever.*

Another instance of the misapplication of this law is in vol. i, p. 128. I think that is an erroneous application. Let us examine it. The argument of the author, in that case, seems to run thus:—

I am naturally inclined to speak the truth.—But I am a man.—By the law of belief before us, all men have the same inclinations: therefore, all men have this inclination. But the intermediate proposition, here, is identical; for before it can be affirmed that any being is a man, *in all respects*, it must be ascertained that he has this inclination. The proper argument in the case is, by analogy,

* The reader will not now understand me to deny the *correctness* of the conclusion, that the sun will rise; nor the correctness of the usual mode of reaching it: but, that Mr. Upham has not stated that process *precisely* as it is. The method of arriving at this conclusion, already noted, though true, is not possible to an *Indian*? For the amusement of those who are pleased with such questions, it is desired to know, how the Indian may correctly derive this inference? This inquiry will evidently present some modification of the views already expressed.

thus:—I am a man, and have a certain inclination. Another has the general characteristics of manhood; therefore, by analogy, he has this, viz., a certain inclination.

Let us pass now to other topics.

The remarks on the immateriality of the soul are conclusive, but not perfect. The power of negative arguments does not seem to be understood. We know what *is*, by its evidence. But, how do we know what is *not*? I answer, in various ways; but, particularly in this:—There is, 1. No evidence that the thing *is*. 2. There is the certainty that if the thing were, there *would be* evidence of it. Therefore it *is not*.

Upon this basis I would construct a negative argument for the immateriality of the soul. That doctrine is a negation—a denial of materiality.

Is the soul material? I answer, No! Because, 1. There is no evidence that it is. 2. If it were, there would be evidence. I take this to be as conclusive an argument as possible: at least, it goes the length of throwing the *onus probandi* where it should be,—upon the materialist.

* We come now to a series of important topics, on which, particularly in reference to the author's manner of treating them, it is proposed to make some remarks. These will be included under the following heads:—1. Mental activity and passivity. 2. Definitions and simple terms. 3. Freedom in general;—of the will in particular.

Neither in the remarks now to be made, nor in those made already, is it forgotten that the critic himself is as liable to criticism as his author. The writer proposes his opinions freely, vouching only for his care in elaborating them, and for the honesty of his purpose in making them known; but by no means expecting them to be implicitly received by those who read. It is not forgotten, that the reviewed may turn reviewer; and that Professor Upham's practised eye may detect of real mistakes in the strictures more and greater than the writer of the strictures *seems to himself* to have detected in the philosophy and its accompanying essay.

Of the points above specified, in order.

1. Of mental passivity and activity.

Without delaying now to determine how far the mental operations are the mere offspring of physical causes, (in the sense of physical

* Strictures might, without difficulty, be passed upon various parts of the principal work under notice. One point only, beside those above mentioned, I wish to bring to view, as it may afford some entertainment to those who are fond of solving such problems. It is a great question:—How does the mind first obtain the notion of externality? In the *Int. Phil.* it is considered, that this notion is received through the sense of touch.—See vol. i, p. 244. Whether that opinion be correct or not, the proof of it is not attempted. Now, if it be correct, how can it be shown to be so? Whoever will undertake it, will find the following points to be made out. 1. The true sense of external and internal, in relation to this subject, must be clearly discriminated. This is no small matter. I am apprehensive most persons would go astray here. 2. The proof must be adduced that this notion cannot be furnished by any other sense than touch, nor by any combination of the senses. 3. It must be shown that *touch* furnishes the intimation that its own organ is external; for not other bodies only, but each one's own body: nay, the very finger which touches is *external* in the present case. It strikes me that this last point has escaped observation.

already noted,) and how far not, it is sufficient to observe that, in certain respects, there are important differences between them. While, in one case, the mind receives the action of external agents, in others it acts upon them. It acts upon them too, not passively, as the sledge hammer upon the iron placed under it, but by an impulse of its own. While truly moved by other things, it truly moves itself. It is this which distinguishes the mind from a piece of mechanism; which, in truth, constitutes man a "living soul."

But Mr. Upham has come as near as possible to making the mind entirely passive. By what method he eluded the proper sense of this term *passive*, in contradistinction from *active*, it is difficult to determine. He has, however, done so very effectually.

Commenting upon the opinion of Butler and Stewart, that habit strengthens the active determinations of our nature, but not the *passive*, he derives this word from the Latin, *pator*, to suffer; and accordingly understands those philosophers to refer to that part of our constitution by which we endure pain. It were as reasonable to consider *passive* verbs as expressive of pain only. Is it not notorious, that in some cases we receive the action of external objects, in which cases we are passive; while in others the mind *acts upon*, in which cases it is active?—See vol. i, p. 173. The same mistake is made in reference to *passion*, which is considered a form of suffering. But does not the word etymologically point out the fact, that in a case of excited sensibility the affection is so strong as to make the man passive rather than active in its indulgence;—a victim, not a master?

The mental state, which led to these mistakes, probably led to oversight of the proper distinction between *emotions* and *desires*. The author, in separating these, chooses to consider emotion as transitory, and desire permanent. But the distinction fails in too many cases, or rather, no such distinction exists. *Desire* is active, *emotion* is passive.

These, indeed, are minor points. It is more important that the whole book is constructed in total neglect of the active property of the mind. Perhaps, we may say, it is put together with an evident intention to make the mind appear as mechanical as possible.

Evidence of this is seen in the parts relating to association, abstraction, attention, and imagination.

1. Association, (see vol. i, p. 477.) The power of the mind over its trains of association, seems to me considerably different from what it is represented to be by Mr. Upham. We have far greater liberty than simply to dwell upon an idea, and then follow just such trains of thought from it as present themselves. We can, to a great extent, specify what law of association shall operate; whether that of contiguity, of contrast, or of cause and effect.

2. Abstraction, (vol. i, p. 341.) We see the theory of passivity still more clearly in the remarks on abstraction. The process, as there delineated, is merely one wheel moving another by cogs and crevices. A complex idea, says our author, is before the mind; a desire to examine some particular part of it springs up, *consequently* all the other parts fall off, and we have the process of abstraction.

It is not necessary to dispute about the desire. But how could it escape the writer, that in the desire of the mind (supposing it to

exist) it is implied that that particular part which the mind desires to examine *is already abstracted*?

The simple process seems to be this:—The mind, in contemplating a complex object, makes sometimes a part, sometimes a quality, the subject of its contemplation. It has, therefore, a power of contemplating parts separately from other parts,—and qualities apart from the subjects in which they inhere. This power is abstraction. This power the mind can exercise with no other restriction than that which is common to all the faculties, viz., that there be a proper object, a proper opportunity, and a suitable physical condition. The brain being the mind's organ, the third particular is an indispensable prerequisite to the mental action.

It may be granted, that *some* form of desire precedes the mental action, though not *that* form which Mr. Upham supposes. Neither does the desire, such as it is, operate upon the abstracting or other faculty, mechanically; but by previously influencing the will.

3. Attention, (vol. i, p. 361.) This power, too, is set free from the dominion of the will, and moves only as it is moved. Under this head there is an instance of the fault now noticed, too striking to be passed. The author is answering the question, Can the mind attend to more than one object at once? This question he resolves into two others, viz., 1. Can the mind attend at once to several things to which it can attend separately? 2. Can the mind, *by one and the same sense*, attend at once to several things, to which it can attend by that sense separately? The former question is answered in the affirmative; and, for an instance, we are shown that we can attend at once to the beautiful color and odorous smell of a rose. But the second question is answered in the negative; we cannot attend to two sounds or two smells at once.

Now, I remark, in the first place, that whatever answer is given to the one question must be given to the other. For, if because sensations of different objects are at the same instant received by several senses, I must be supposed to attend to all these objects; then, because I can receive sensations of sound, by the *same* sense, from several sounding bodies, I must also be considered as attending to these at the same instant. But the latter, *i. e.*, the negative answer, is correct:—the former, therefore, is incorrect. How, then, is Mr. Upham led into this mistake? I answer, by his theory of passivity. Attention, with him, is not the voluntary direction of the mind to an object; but simply the presence of the sensation, combined, perhaps, with desire, but still lacking the element of self-direction. The whole section is an instance of the almost total want of *that* discrimination, which should, by all means, characterize an intellectual philosopher.

4. Reasoning and imagination, (vol. ii, pp. 24, 25, 92.) Reasoning, which certainly, if any, implies the voluntary power, is in the same independent state with the powers above mentioned. Imagination also. In the remarks on this latter, the power of the will is virtually nullified. "Whatever a person wills, or professes to will to imagine, he has already imagined; and, consequently, there can be no such thing as strictly voluntary imaginings." Accordingly, it is represented as a contradiction in terms, to speak of willing to imagine a *brazen sea*. But, I think it is not so. I can, by abstrac-

tion, separate the notion of a liquid expanse from that of water. I can also form a notion of molten brass; and, lastly, by an effort of "voluntary imagining," combine the two, or conceive a "brazen sea."

I know this by my having done it just now. I am sure I formed no idea of a brazen sea until this present writing, when I did it because I wished to see if it could be done.

Let one read the chapter on imagination; particularly that on imaginations attended with desire, and that on the formation of Milton's garden of Eden, and he will have passivity enough.

The author, somewhere in this part of his work, represents the view which a reasoner has of the parts of his argument, as the work of imagination! We will proceed now to the second topic proposed for consideration.

II. Definitions and simple terms.

The consideration of these is rendered important by their connection with remarks to be made in reference to the will and its freedom. The subject is treated by the author at p. 180, vol. i, and p. 271, vol. ii, of the Intellectual Philosophy, and in various incidental remarks, scattered through the two works.

The good old rule of definition, which has come to us from the schoolmen, is—by genus and difference. With this rule Mr. Upham finds fault. But the futility of the objection may establish the rule. It is not objected by him that the principle of the rule is bad, but that a certain definition, formed upon that model, and quoted by him, is not very intelligible. This is about as reasonable as to say that men should not raise walls by the plummet, because, in spite of the plummet, a blockhead can easily make an inclining wall.

That rule seems to me the best possible for *cases to which it is applicable*. It is simple, and withal serves the great purpose of binding our ideas, and keeping the relations of things ever before us.

Terms are divisible into two classes,—simple and complex. The latter may be resolved into the former; or, rather, it may be shown to what simple terms the complex one is equivalent. It is a question, how a simple term may be defined? or, rather, how the idea of it may be conveyed to a mind which has it not? To a mind which has it not, there is no possibility of conveying it *by words*; and, as this is the main object of definition, we may say, a simple term is *indefinable*. But, is it necessary to reject the aid of words altogether, and say, that for the sense of such a term every one must depend upon his own mind? I think not. Mr. Upham carries this view of the case to an extreme. When he meets with a simple term, he tells us it is simple, and then leaves us to ourselves. In order to perceive how far it is possible for us to circumscribe simple terms, let us select an instance.—Let it be *sweetness*. It is not necessary to suppose that, in every case, where an individual does not know the meaning of a simple term, he has not the idea corresponding. A Frenchman has the ideas of many simple English terms, which he cannot understand. But, for the present, let us suppose that the individual has no notion of sweetness. Are words, in that case, useless? It is granted that one cannot, by words, convey to him the notion. But, are words, therefore, to no purpose?

Cannot one so circumscribe the idea, that when it *does* enter his mind, he shall know it to be the idea of sweetness? Let us try our modes of defining. Mr. Upham tells him, sweetness is a simple term, and, therefore, indefinable. A schoolman, sweetness is the name of a certain sensation received by the palate of a person in good health, upon the presence of certain objects, &c. Now, he has no more idea of sweetness than he had before; but, 1. He knows what it is not. It is not a sight,—it is not a sound. 2. When he tastes sugar he will be able to say, the sensation I now have is of *sweetness*. This may serve the purpose of illustration. The word, I know, is used in other simple significations and includes more than I have mentioned.

But if this man have the idea and not the word, I may resort to a synonym. Let him be an old Roman come to new life. Hearing people talk of sweetness, he wishes to know what it is. Find out by experience, says one. *Dulcedo*, says another, and is understood.

True, there is a limit beyond which these operations cannot go. In the former case, there is always a part of the idea which *must* come by experience or not at all. Beside, there are many simple terms, for the explaining of which, words serve but little purpose. I am not disputing the strict indefinableness of simple terms. But they seem to me to be not so lawless as the author imagines.

One can hardly tell the difference, in the Intellectual Philosophy, between instincts, propensities, and desires. In the Essay, it is plainly conceded, in reference to the simple term (so called) *freedom*, that if an individual profess to have the idea of it, we must concede his claim,—we have no means of putting him to the test. And if he farther pretend to be conscious* of not being free, that also must be conceded. He is not free.

The importance of this topic will appear still more fully hereafter.

Words may be of use, it appears, in explaining simple terms to the following extent:—1. Synonymous words may be used, and very profitably; not to convey an idea, but to reveal it. Beside, these words are tests, the one of the other. If I know two words to be synonymous, and yet perceive that I do not use them interchangeably, I may be sure I have not the precise idea denoted by them both. 2. We may state the circumstances under which the idea will present itself as above; so that, when the person addressed has the idea, he will be able to name it.

Should an individual affirm an idea to be simple when it is complex, how is he to be refuted? Perhaps it would devolve upon the individual affirming it to be complex to prove his assertion; as, if it be simple, the argumentative proof will, perhaps, be impossible. *Freedom* Mr. Upham affirms to be a simple term. (See Essay on the Will, p. 226.) I affirm it to be complex. I prove it to be such by resolving it into its elements. Thus, power is a simple term; *so* simple, as to defy the *power* of words to explain it. The only

* I do not know whether I shall be accounted insane or not, but I cannot avoid propounding the query, How does consciousness teach men that they are free? My consciousness does not teach me either that I am or am not. It appears to me, the matter does not come under the cognizance of consciousness at all.

method of explaining such words as these is, to present the verbal connections in which they occur, or to point them out as their ideas present themselves in nature. But the idea of *power in opposition to power*, is complex, equivalent to the former, in a certain relation. It may be disputed whether the idea of power negatived, as in the phrase *no power*, be simple or complex. However, all these are included in the idea of freedom.

For, 1. Freedom is a word denoting things in a certain relation. It does not denote an object simply, but the *state* of an object, in reference to other objects. 2. Power is the thing related. Manifestly, nothing can be free which has not power. But, 3. That to which the power is related is also power; for power only can be opposed to freedom. And, 4. The relation is negative, for the thing related is free, *i. e.*, not obstructed by the other power.

This, then, is freedom:—absence of opposing power. Mr. Upham, I suppose, would call this a synonym. But, how absurd to talk of a sentence as synonymous with a word! See Essay, p. 228. Does Mr. Upham really expect that a definition will convey some other idea than that of the word defined?

Freedom is the state of a power when unopposed by any other power. To vary the expression, though not the idea, any thing is free when its action is its own.

As the subject of freedom is an important one, apart from the definableness of terms, it may not be idleness to consider it a little farther. It may be considered, 1. In reference to the subjects to which it is attributed. 2. The subjects of it may be considered in reference to their freedom. These points will be touched, though not very systematically, in the paragraphs immediately following.

1. According to our view, freedom is power, in a certain relation. Properly, it can be affirmed only of a power. If, therefore, any thing be said to have power by accommodation, it will be said to have freedom in an accommodated sense. Hence, material things, having the one, in the one sense, must have the other, in the same.

This action is their own, not that they originate it, but that they only of material things are adapted to perform it. The piston of a steam engine is free when it is not prevented from doing what it was designed to do. If it be chained above, or obstructed below, it is not free. Here, although the action is as much that of the engineer, or of the steam, yet it is also its own, in distinction from the rudder or bowsprit; as these, no matter how adjusted, could not perform it. Any thing is free, in this sense, when it is not obstructed in the action for which it is adapted. The human eye is free when it moves within its prescribed sphere, at the bidding of the will. It is *not* free when it cannot take in every direction lying in front of the individual; it *is* free, though totally unable to reveal what is behind the face. 2. Now, it is important to notice that, the mental faculties have this *physical* freedom. Imagination is free; not that it governs itself, but that it is not obstructed in the action for which it was made. But, if the brain be diseased it cannot act; it is not free. One step more:—The will itself has this physical freedom. The volition follows a certain motive, and while nothing prevents the consecution, the freedom is perfect. That there *are* volitions, bound to certain antecedents, is too plain to be denied.

But, some one may object, and say, this is mental and voluntary freedom. I know it is mental and voluntary; but, it is also physical. It has been already explained, that mental and physical are not necessarily opposed. Wherever effects invariably follow certain antecedents there is *physical law*.

3. The great consideration connected with this topic is, that while material things may be divested of their freedom, by one another, mind cannot, except by itself, or by the body connected with it.

The mind cannot act except freely. You say, a man may be compelled to think of certain things, or not. But how is he compelled? Either he directs his mind, by an effort of will, or he does not. If he does not, the mind acts by its own power; in which case it is free. The objection will, doubtless, arise, that the mental is, in such case, prescribed by the external circumstances. This leads me to notice an important consideration, which may settle the question. The mind is not appointed to act, in certain ways, absolutely without reference to occasions; but, to act *so* and *so*, under *such* and *such* circumstances. It is not like the piston of a steam engine, which, unless it be fitted to a cylinder, is no piston. In this case, the circumstances are definite. But, mind is still mind, no matter what the circumstances. It operates freely, whenever it acts, by its own laws; though the precise operation be different, according to circumstances.

Now, as compulsion can only vary the external circumstances, the mind still acting in its own way, there is no *outward* power which can destroy the mind's liberty.

But if, in the case supposed, the individual guide his mind by volition, then he is influenced by some motive; and, to be influenced by a motive without consent, is impossible. I grant that the volition may have followed physically. Still, it is volition; and volition is choice.

It is manifest from this that will cannot but be free.

4. This, however, is *physical* freedom, and implies neither virtue nor vice.

Let us now consider man as a unit, or as *one* being, composed of body and spirit. It is plain, 1. That he, as a man, is not free, unless all the parts are so. Though the intellectual powers and the will be free, (as they must be,) yet he is not free, if his body be confined. 2. That, though he, as a whole, be free, and the parts unobstructed by extrinsic influence, the parts may be not at liberty among themselves. The passions may domineer over the will; the will over the conscience.

5. But all this freedom is without a moral quality. Let us then consider *moral* freedom.

Any thing is free when its action is its own. It is *morally* free when its action is *so* its own that it is responsible, *i. e.*, liable to rewards and punishments, on the account of it: in other words, it is free in this sense when it *originates*, and *so far* as it originates, its own action.

This is a new element, entirely beyond the former. That creates no responsibility; this does. This cannot subsist without that; that may subsist without this.

6. From this point seem to radiate all the various theories re-

specting human accountability. The reader, it is hoped, will indulge a little latitude.

Dr. Adam Clarke affirms that the will is an essentially free principle, and that to apply to it the epithet *free*, is absurd. Freedom constitutes it voluntary. The Christian Spectator repeats the remark, giving it a hearty concurrence.

Is there any difference between them? Much every way. As the subject is well adapted for illustration we will dwell upon it.

7. It has already been noticed that, *physically*, the will cannot but be free. A consideration of the character of voluntary operations suffices to evince this. Dr. Clarke, the Christian Spectator, and myself, would probably all use the same illustrations here. I have just finished the above sentence; I might have left it unfinished; or, have never begun it. Thus I am free. Nay, I cannot be otherwise. One might have taken my hand and made the marks, but he could not have compelled *me* to write it. More yet. He might have threatened me with death, and so have *induced* me to will it. But the act would have been voluntary still. I chose to do it, sooner than die. Thus, I am *essentially* free. There cannot be will without freedom.

8. Dr. Clarke's mistake, as I deem it, lies in this,—that failing to distinguish *moral* from *physical* freedom, he has affirmed that of the will generally which belongs to it, only in *one* respect. Did Dr. Clarke forget that, according to Scripture, men are *naturally* free only to evil? There is no dispute but that I can, or not, omit this present writing; but, can I or not omit it *morally*? That is, though I am free, as a *rational* being, am I also free as a *moral*? It is manifest, I may be, or I may not.

9. But, are the metaphysicians of the Spectator right? Or, rather, granting them mistaken, is their mistake the same with that of Dr. Clarke? I think not. He confounded that freedom which is inseparable from rationality, with that which is inseparable from moral character; affirming both (or both in one) to be *essential*, while one only is so.

But *they* affirm moral freedom to *consist* in physical. They would say, man is physically free—physically, as before explained—and, so, morally. In other words, you may cease writing or not, if you please; *therefore*, you may, or may not, be punished for it. I answer, not so. I may, or may not, write. Therefore, I must abide the natural consequences. But, before I can be brought to judgment and punished, it must be seen that the act was so mine, that *I* am responsible. If it appear that, though I willed it, yet, my *willing* followed as an effect from some exterior cause, I am irresponsible.

Here our doctrine may be summed up.

1. There is a freedom of the will which is inseparable from intelligence (not to say *rationality*, with which some might cavil.) Brutes have it as truly as men. In this respect, the will is an *essentially* free principle.

2. Moral freedom implies the other, though the other does not imply it. Moral freedom is *incidental*, not *essential*. The devils have it not, and yet are rational. Doubtless they deliberate, *choose*, and *resolve*. Thus they are free, but to no good.

3. Physical freedom involves no responsibility, unless the moral have been lost by abuse.

4. Men are not, by nature, morally free. The death of Christ and coming of the Spirit are the basis of man's moral freedom.

III. Of the will.

The will and the action of the other powers are so intimately connected that it is not possible to form a correct view of the one without the other. The remarks under the first head all refer to the mind's power of self-regulation, which is but another name for the voluntary power. We might, therefore, so far as accuracy is concerned, have classed them together. But, for certain reasons, we have not chosen to do so.

The caption of our article will show that Professor Upham has discussed this branch of mental philosophy in two separate works; the one being the system of Intellectual Philosophy, already noticed; the other a separate treatise, of about one-third the dimensions of the former.

I was aware of the existence of both treatises when I commenced writing; but, supposing the latter work rather a confirmation than otherwise of the doctrines of the former, I did not read it until my thoughts were arranged. Upon taking it up, however, in connection with the topic now under consideration, in order to a fuller view of the author's doctrine and mode of illustration, I find a very great divergency of the one from the other. In the latter, not only farther illustrations are adduced, but Professor Upham on the *Will*, refutes Professor Upham on the *Desires*.

As the case is, I will only briefly point out the different positions of the two works, and then remark upon some statements of the latter.

In the former work, there are but two classes of mental states; viz., intellectual and sentient. The sentient are again divided into emotions and desires. Under the genus *desires* is included *volition*, as a species. Volition, therefore, is a modified desire. In the latter work all this is laid aside, and the mental states are threefold:—intellectual, sentient, and voluntary. A large part, also, is occupied in showing the difference between volitions and desires; the latter being considered as without sentience. The author distinctly informs us, that no satisfactory progress can be made in delineating the will, until it is established as a fundamental principle, that desires and volitions are essentially different. See Essay, p. 85.

In the former work it is plainly asserted, "the will is always in accordance with the strongest motive;" "in other words, the will always is, as the greatest apparent good." To this doctrine the definition of liberty is accommodated. See vol. ii, p. 379.

The futility of the assertion might be made apparent from the remarks of the writer himself; but, as he has informed us, in the Treatise on the Will, that the proposition, that the will is governed by the strongest motive, is, in many cases, identical, we need not delay upon it.

Whether the latter publication was intended to neutralize the former, so far as this subject is concerned, one can hardly determine. Certainly, I did not concur with all the positions of the one: with those of the other, in most respects, I did. The differences between

the two, as already pointed out, are certainly material. If it was *not* so intended, it would be well for some one else to intend it; if it *were*, the necessity of remodelling the former publication into consistency with the latter, and with truth, still remains, both as concerns the doctrine of the will and the other points specified. Whether the course actually pursued by our author, in thus laying before the public contradictory conclusions, without any note of difference, be as ingenuous as one that might have been pursued, must be left to every one's judgment. An author is not always bound to make formal retraction when favored with increasing light. Retraction, however, may at times be the nobler policy.

It is not necessary to characterize the Essay as indicating great judgment and industry. These qualities always show themselves in the productions of this author.

With it, as a whole, I find but one fault, though that be a material one. I am not able to sum up the doctrine, and determine precisely the truths evolved, and how much they include.

The following paragraphs contain remarks on one particular and prominent part of the work.

The author is giving us an analysis of the basis on which rests the fabric of our voluntary operations. So far as the argument is concerned, there are three great propositions:—1. The will is subject to law. 2. The will is free. 3. The will has power.

With the former only are we concerned at present. First of all, it is to be ascertained in what sense of *law* the will is subject.

Mr. Upham, himself, nowhere defines the word law, unless when he calls it, in the Philosophy, "a designation of the circumstances, under which the mental action presents itself." Whether this definition be correct or not, it does not serve our purpose. Under which of the three kinds of law is that here spoken of to be included? It is not moral; it is human; it is physical. Mr. Upham evidently means the rules by which volitions *are* governed, and governed by a *power extrinsic to the willing principle*. I am not tenacious of the word *physical*. I use it as the best I have. The idea alone is essential. That includes two things. *An actual and efficient causation from an extrinsic source.*

The reader will please notice the precise sense of that word, *extrinsic*. It does not mean external to the mind, but to the will. Though it be a motive, and motive be defined *a mental conception*; or mode of conceiving, still it is external to the will. It is not doubted but that will governs the mental action; but, in governing, is the will itself governed?

The entire current of the argument and illustration evinces this to be the kind of law here spoken of.

Instead of saying, the will is subject to law, I would say, the will has a certain sphere, within which alone it can act; and there are certain circumstances, which must be present, in order that it may act. It is under restriction. But the term is not worthy of contention. To a certain extent, will is subject to law. This seems indisputable. The objection made to the Essay will be distinctly seen in a few remarks.

(1.) The first argument, in maintaining the position mentioned, is

from analogy. We meet with law everywhere; therefore, we may expect it here. See Essay, p. 109.

Such an argument is not demonstrative. It is plain that, unless responsibility be denied, we must at last come to a point at which the argument halts; at which we are released from the domination of physical law.

We find *some* law everywhere; but, it is not of course a *physical* law.

This argument is variously modified in the Essay. It is said, if there be a God, he must govern. If he governs, it must be by law. This is granted. But, must it be by such law as the argument contends for? May it not be moral law? Do not legislators govern? They certainly do. Yet not by physical laws.

Will Mr. Upham say, that man, so far as subject to moral law *only*, is free from control? I think not. If not, then the necessity of control does not argue the necessity of physical law.

Mr. Upham confounds supervision with constraint. The objection to this argument is, that it pushes subjection to law into *fatalism*.

(2.) The primary law of causality is brought in to support the same conclusion. "Every change must have a cause." Essay, p. 121.

That causality is affirmed of volitions, in the same sense as of other things, is made plain by the illustrations.

The operations of the will, by this showing, follow certain external influences, as motion follows impulse. External—the reader will observe—not to mind, necessarily, but to the will.

It is true, Mr. Upham remarks, at the conclusion, that he does not specify the precise nature of the cause. "We use the term cause, here," he observes, "as we have done in all that has been said in its broadest sense, as meaning, according to the nature of the subject spoken of, either the mere antecedent occasion, or the antecedent combined with power;"—"as expressing either the effective cause which truly *makes* the sequence, or the preparative cause, which is merely a *condition* of the existence of such sequence." The reader is requested to turn to this singular passage, at p. 133.

Observe here, 1. That while the word *cause* will bear *two* significations, *widely different* from each other, we are not informed in which of the two it is used. In the language of the author, he "does not specify the precise nature of the cause." This is mystification. It has the *appearance* of a disposition to resort to either sense, as the case may require. I do not mean, even by implication, that that was intended. But an enemy might suspect it.

2. If, in the argument, the term cause is not used in the same sense as in other cases, particularly in that great doctrine which constitutes a law of belief, of what avail is it to the conclusion?

The belief in the causation of voluntary states arises from the notion of "God's omniscience and superintendence." See p. 132.

Here, omniscience is used to include foreknowledge proper, and superintendence, in Mr. Upham's view, is constraining influence. See above, and Essay, pp. 117, 148, 149.

But, if the causes do not compel the results, how do they sustain these attributes?

I think, again, that the author carries out subjection to law until it becomes fatalism.

(3.) The argument from the Divine prescience presents the same objectionable feature in several aspects. See p. 160.

In this passage Mr. Upham presents himself as a believer in the "Eternal Now." With God, there are no relations of past, present, and future.

Instead of God's foreknowledge furnishing the basis of this doctrine, this furnishes the basis of the foreknowledge. See foot of p. 162. Foreknowledge there is attributed to God in an improper sense. And yet, strange to tell! from foreknowledge, as if proper, is argued subjection to law. I hope the reader perceives the delusion. I believe it is not peculiar to Mr. Upham.

His argument appears to stand thus:—God knows all things; future as well as present. He, therefore, *foreknows* volitions yet to arise. But, he can *foreknow* volitions only as they are the effects of present causes, by running his mind down the chain of sequences to the ultimate result. Essay, p. 166.

Therefore, volition must be subject to law. A stranger medley could not be produced. Manifestly, if men define the *foreknowledge* to be improperly so called, in condescension to human capacity, they should argue from it as such; in which case, there can be no foundation for the inference of the Essay.

I mention this in order to arrest the conclusion following from it. For, if subjection to law be inferred from foreknowledge, then it must be inferred without limit. The foreknowledge being of every volition, and of every form and degree of it, every form and degree must be the effect of a Divinely appointed law. The will, in that case, is mechanical—it is governed by physical laws, like the ascent and descent of vapors. Behind such an argument as this, fatalism is securely sheltered, though unseen.

The occurrence of these arguments indicates that the author is scarcely prepared to follow the doctrines which he himself has laid down to their fair conclusion.

Other arguments, in support of the proposition, that the will is subject to law, are less objectionable.

(4.) The will's subjection to law having been proved, it becomes a question, how this subjection may be reconciled with its admitted freedom? See p. 244. The difficulty of reconciling them is virtually admitted. I know it is affirmed that the contradiction is only *apparent*; but this is affirmed, not because their compatibility is apparent, but, because each is supposed to be proved true. This is the method by which foreordination of *all* things is reconciled with freedom of *some* things.

The reader is requested to notice the connection between the subject of defining simple terms, particularly *freedom*, and that before us. By his mode of treating these terms, and by considering *freedom* as simple, he renders any attempt to show the compatibility of law and freedom impossible. For, in order to show this compatibility, freedom must be defined, or, at least, in some way circumscribed.

It is true, when we reach the fact, that the will is free, we reach

an *ultimate* fact. Nevertheless, we do not reach one which is contrary to others of the same class.

A few remarks on this topic may not be out of place.

An illustration presents itself from a kindred subject, which, as it is important in itself, is also calculated to throw light upon the present inquiry.

The immutability of God is a grand doctrine of Scripture; a postulate in argument with all enlightened men. Should I affirm that God repents, some critic might call me to account with the assertion, that God is immutable—eternally, essentially immutable. I answer, *because* he is immutable, *therefore* he is, in a sense, mutable. The louder you cry up his immutability, the louder do you cry up his mutability, in the sense designed. That there is change of some kind, in the Divine Being, is certain; for, an inspired prophet exclaims, "Though thou wast *angry* with me, yet thine anger is turned away." He himself declares that, with the froward he will show himself froward; with the pure, pure. He thus looks variously upon saint and sinner; and, if so, he looks upon the same man, when holy, differently from what he does when sinful. Immutability of character implies mutability of active manifestation.

Hence, if you affirm God to be immutable in his regard for individuals, you make him mutable in character. For, as individuals vary, God can only remain the same in his *character* by varying in his *conduct toward them*.

By this case our subject may be somewhat cleared up. Perhaps, using the strong terms of Professor Upham,—*subjection to law*—there is a difficulty. But, if we say the will is restricted to a certain sphere, and its action impossible, except under certain circumstances, there seems to be less difficulty.

It has been noticed that power is necessary to freedom. But there can be no power except as a thing acts within a definite limit, and under certain circumstances. God only is an unrestricted agent. In this sense, limitation is necessary to freedom.

Suppose, for a moment, the will to be unrestricted in its sphere, and unbounded as to circumstances, we would soon have a verification of the illustration which has been brought forward; viz., of the ass dying between two bundles of hay, for lack of ability to determine which presented the strongest motive to devour it.

Let us now sum up on the matter of the present topic.

The author is giving an analysis of the will. In doing so, he presents us with three great points,—1. The will is subject to law. 2. The will is free. 3. The will has power.

On the two last points he presents what may be considered a fair view of the case. The will has freedom, and that which is necessary to it; viz., power. But, he not only gives no definition of freedom, he attempts in noway to circumscribe the notion of it. He goes the length of admitting, that we have no means of testing an individual's sense of it. This is altogether too indefinite. In accordance with these views, one *should* be a believer in actual freedom; he *might* be a fatalist. When arguing, however, for the will's subjection to law, a doctrine easily established within proper limits, he establishes too much. So much as to destroy the very freedom for which he afterwards contends.

Thus, though there is a fence put up between fatalism and the assertion of human freedom, it is so gauze-like—so aerial—that nothing is easier than, by adroit evolution, to be upon both sides of it.

CONCLUSION.

It is now time to bring these strictures to a close.

An undervaluation of Professor Upham, I hope has not been suspected in the course of the foregoing remarks. My purpose has been to dwell upon some points in which I thought the earlier of the two works, at least, requires emendation.

That the metaphysics is tinged with a certain theology, seems plain. Yet, I do not suspect the author of a concealed aim. Not in the least. But, it is worth while to have an eye upon these matters; and, if it be not possible to have a prop without an inclination, let there be a prop upon the other side of the house which shall lean the other way. In other words, if bias there must be, let one bias counteract another.

The earlier view of the will, propounded by Mr. Upham, is substantially the metaphysics of Calvinism, both old and new.

However, the above strictures are not based upon any theological views:—they have been made entirely irrespective of theology.

The learning and activity of our Presbyterian brethren have enabled them to engross to themselves almost all the departments of elementary instruction. Not only have they the learned men, but almost all the books, involving principles cognate to those of theology, come from Calvinistic hands.

I do not object. Our Presbyterian brethren are right. Howbeit, while in malice we are children, in understanding let us be men. Cannot some one of our accomplished men supply the desideratum of an American authority on the subject of Intellectual Philosophy? The work under notice is defective. Lucid and simple, it lacks discrimination and compass of thought.

Among human sciences, Intellectual Philosophy is the *grand* science. There is a man among us equal to it; equal to it in mental discipline, in knowledge, and, for aught I know, in adventitious circumstances. Will he find himself out and address himself to the task?

THE HIBERNIAN SOCIETY.

FROM the report of this society made in May last, it appears that it has, during the thirty years of its existence, given education to **SIX HUNDRED THOUSAND CHILDREN**, many of whom have since grown up to manhood, and by their conduct proved that the charity consecrated to this benevolent institution had not been misapplied. The number of day, Sunday, and adult schools, was, at the time of making the report, 1,962; and the number of scholars, 115,323. There had been an increase of seventeen schools, and eight hundred and thirty-seven pupils. In the day schools there were 77,762 scholars, of whom 29,600 were Roman Catholics. The principal complaint,

as indicated by the report, was the want of sufficient funds efficiently to carry on the operations of the society. The receipts of the last year amounted to £10,412. 9s. 10½d.; which was £1,375. 1s. 9d. above those of the preceding year.

REVIVAL OF THE WORK OF GOD.

ILLUSTRATION, ETC.

WITHIN a few months past we have received from our correspondents several communications calling our attention to the subject of revivals, of discipline, and of other matters, which they deem to have a bearing upon the state of religion in the Church. One of these directs our mind particularly to the prayer of the prophet, "O Lord, revive thy work," and desires an illustration of its meaning. All these we should have replied to in the *Advocate and Journal*, had it been suitable and convenient; but it would necessarily have involved much repetition to have stated and answered them separately; and some of them especially would have required a more extended concatenation of propositions and illustrations than would be suitable for the columns of a weekly periodical. Our own views and feelings in regard to the subject generally could be more conveniently expressed in something like a formal essay on the main point, conducted in a way to include the more subordinate ones. This we have done in the following discourse, which we wish our correspondents to consider as embracing that notice of their several communications which they may have expected in another form. It was intended to pay this merited attention to the communications of our friends at an earlier period; but circumstances have prevented. We make no claim for the discourse other than that it exhibits our views and feelings on the subject of the state of religion in the Church, and the true grounds on which we are encouraged to hope and labor for revival.

Habakkuk iii, 2. O Lord, revive thy work.

In order properly to understand the import of this prayer, we must inquire into the nature and application of the terms of which it is composed.

1. What do we understand by the phrase, "thy work," as it is used in the text? This is our first inquiry. The term "work" is used to signify both the act of an agent by which something is produced, and the thing produced by such act. Thus God is said to work. "I will work, and who shall let it."—"I will work a work in your days, which ye will not believe, though it be told you."—"My Father worketh hitherto, and I work."

In this active form, the phrase, "work of God," conveys an idea

of that operative and powerful agency by which he is acknowledged to interpose in the affairs of man in this world.

But the term is also used when reference is had to the object of an action, or the thing produced or affected by it. Thus the Decalogue written by the finger of Jehovah is, in the language of Scripture, denominated the "work of God." So also are the earth, the heavens, and the wondrous things brought about by his providential care and judgments in the wise administration of his government among men. "O Lord, how manifold are thy works! in wisdom hast thou made them all!"—"The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth his handy work." Hence, to create is the work of God; and that which he creates is his work. So also it is his work to give life; and the life he gives is his work.

The same remarks apply to the dispensations of his providence. Judgment is his strange work; yet in vindication of his righteous law he sometimes executes it, in a way to show his wrath, and to make his power known. Thus he did in the destruction of the old world by the flood, the overthrow of the Egyptians in the Red Sea, the desolation of the cities of the plain by fire, and the long threatened retribution which he brought upon his own people the Jews, for their disobedience and rebellion. In all these summary visitations, he seemed to say, "Do not I the Lord do all these things?" But the effect produced by these dispensations has been, in each case, denominated the work of God.

The great and glorious work of redemption is also ascribed to him in the most direct and glowing terms:—"Sing, O heavens, for the Lord hath done it; shout, ye lower parts of the earth; break forth into singing, ye mountains, O forest, and every tree therein, for the Lord hath redeemed Jacob, and glorified himself in Israel." "Sing unto the Lord, for he hath done marvellous things;—declare his marvellous works among all nations." In view of his goings forth to execute the deep and mysterious counsels of his wisdom and grace, the redeemed before his throne sing, "Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints."

The same direct and operative agency is acknowledged in the awakening and salvation of sinners:—"It is God that worketh in you both to will and to do, of his good pleasure." In order to our salvation, our minds must be illuminated, our consciences awakened, and our souls pardoned, renewed, and cleansed. "All these worketh that one and the same Spirit."—"For it is the same God that worketh all and in all." They therefore who are thus prepared as the children of God for the communion of saints, and are "raised up together to sit together in heavenly places," are said to be "created anew in Christ Jesus, unto good works;" and the Church, so constituted by the Divine agency and influence, is appropriately denominated "a new creation." By the spirit of his grace he worketh in us to prepare us as lively stones for a place in the spiritual temple, and the temple constituted of such lively stones is "the work of God." This distinction it is important to observe in illustrating the subject under consideration.

By the "work of God," as used in the text, many understand the influences of the Spirit in the awakening and conversion of sinners;

and with them a revival of religion, or of the work of God, which they use synonymously, is the prevalence of awakenings and conversions among the people. Thus, when they pray in the language of the text, "O Lord, revive thy work," they pray *solely* for the awakening and conversion of sinners. Few probably embrace any other object in their desires or thoughts, or suppose their petition is to be answered in any other way. This, therefore, is really *their* prayer, when they use these terms; for "God looketh at the heart;" and they cannot be supposed to pray for what enters not into the thoughts of their hearts. But was it the prayer of the prophet? was there no other object which interested his feelings, and called forth the holiest aspirations of his soul in the use of these expressions of ardent supplication? It is believed there was. By the expression, "thy work," the prophet undoubtedly meant the CHURCH OF GOD.

This was the object upon which his feelings were fixed with intense desire; and he therefore earnestly prayed for its deliverance and prosperity. He viewed it in a languishing state; he saw it encircled by enemies and evils, which gave him anxious concern for its safety; and for it primarily and principally he invoked the healthful spirit of quickening grace. The prayer, it is true, as we shall have occasion to show, includes the influences of the Divine Spirit in all their operations; for these invariably accompany a revival of the Church. These are indeed parts of the general work of revival. But that these influences are not primarily intended, in the use of the term "thy work," in the prayer of the prophet, is evident from this, that they are implied in the operation of that agency by which God revives his work; and if by the term "work" the prophet meant the influences of the Divine Spirit in their various operations, and these only, the import of the prayer was, O Lord, revive thy revival,—an unintelligible and absurd solecism. It is believed, therefore, that by the term "work," as used by the prophet in this prayer, is intended the Church of God upon earth. In this light I shall consider it in the following remarks.

2. The term *revival* signifies a "return, recall, or recovery to life from death, or apparent death;" which is, according to its radical import, "to live again." *To revive*, when used intransitively, means to "recover life," to "recuscitate," or to "rise from the dead."—"To this end Christ both died, rose, and revived." When used in a way to imply an action and an object, it means "to bring again to life," "to reanimate," or "to restore to strength and vigor from a state of deep languor and depression." In this sense it is used in the prayer of the prophet. God is humbly and ardently implored to restore the wasted energies of the Church, and to give it new life and vigor.

I. That we may profitably use this prayer, let us first contemplate the Church as the work of God, and therefore an object of the affectionate regards of all who love and fear him.

1. By the Church of God I understand that institution in which are recognised the forms of religious worship, such as he acknowledges and approves. To this institution it is essential that there be external form, and the principle of life. In both these respects we understand it to be the work of God. By external form is meant that organization of a system of service and worship by which

God is publicly acknowledged and revered in the ordinances which he has ordained. In such an institution pure religion has a habitation among men; and through it the Gospel of the grace of God is communicated to a fallen world. God himself has honored it by giving it the sanction of his own name, and by promising it his peculiar care and protection. By the principle of life is understood the direct witness of the Spirit, enjoyed by such as worship God in spirit and in truth.

2. It will be observed, the term Church is used here in its most general sense, to signify the instituted worship of God, such as he has been pleased to acknowledge and accept in all ages and under all dispensations. Such was the worship of Abel, who through faith offered an acceptable sacrifice unto God, and "obtained witness that he was righteous." The antediluvian saints had their altars, their sacrifices, and their worship. Thus Enoch walked with God, and Noah was a preacher of righteousness to the corrupt age in which he lived.

To the institution of his Church God gave a more definite and fixed character in his covenant with Abraham, and in the tabernacle and the temple which were formed and raised by his express command, we discover enlarged privileges for sacrificial offerings and public oblations under the old dispensation, and a symbolic representation of acceptable worship under the new. These were constructed according to the pattern he gave. With them he identified his name and his honor. Here we find the oracle, the ark of the covenant, and the mercy seat, all lively representations of better things to come. Here, too, was manifested the sensible presence of the Deity, in the pillar of cloud and of fire, and in the glory which filled the temple. All these representations were fulfilled in the Christian Church, whose privileges were extended to embrace the Gentiles, and rendered more spiritual and simple, to suit the dispensation. The carnal ordinances of the Jews having subsided, and the Holy Ghost being given in its full measure to qualify the ministry for their labors, and to edify believers in their communion, the work was consummated for all succeeding ages. Such as it was then it is now, and ever will be. We may be allowed to add here, that whatever external changes and modifications the Church has undergone from the beginning, to suit it to the different dispensations, in its essential elements it is identical. In no instance has one Church been displaced for the institution of another. It was founded in the promise of a Messiah; and under all the forms and variations of its external aspect, the true worship of the one living and true God, through Christ the Redeemer and Mediator, has been the object. And wherever, at any time, among the ancients in days past, or in any community of devout worshippers at the present, such worship has been or now is practised, there is the Church; and the Most High deigns to own and acknowledge such worshippers as his people—his Church.

3. This institution we say, then, is the work of God. Such the Scriptures represent it to be in all the figures and forms of expression employed by the sacred writers. In the use of the lively images of inspiration it is denominated the city of God, the house of God, the sanctuary, and the temple of God, God's heritage, his vineyard,

his building, Israel, Jacob, and the body of Christ. In all these respects God claims it as his own work. "Have I not created thee, O Jacob," said he, "and formed thee, O Israel?"—"This people have I formed for myself; they shall show forth my praise."—"Thus saith the Lord, the Holy One of Israel, and his Maker," &c.—"Thy Maker is thy husband, the Lord of Hosts is his name"—"Ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building;"—"are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone; in whom all the building, fitly framed together, groweth into a holy temple in the Lord; in whom ye also are builded together for a habitation of God, through the Spirit."—"For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body; so also is Christ:—Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular."—"We are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works."

4. That the institution of the Church is the work of God, we have this farther testimony, that in all its features, it bears marks of being the production of superhuman agency. God's work is distinguished from the works of art in at least these three respects:—it shows infinite goodness in the design, infinite wisdom in the mysterious connection and harmony of its parts, and infinite power in the execution of it. All these we see in the simplest forms of nature. In the grass which clothes the field, the goodness, wisdom, and power of God are displayed in a way which no human art can imitate. Man may paint a landscape, but he cannot cause a spear of grass to grow. He may, by duly observing the operations of nature, discover the uniform succession of events; but, the mysterious ligament which binds causes and effects together lies deeply and necessarily concealed from his view. He can never know it, and therefore, never be able to imitate the works of God. These are some of the strong marks which characterize the Divine agency in material existence. And is it too much to say, that where the same marks are discoverable in things of a spiritual nature, the same decision should be formed respecting them? Goodness, wisdom, and power, such as no purely human being ever possessed, appear in the establishment of the Church, and the economy of salvation as revealed in the Gospel. In confirmation of this, we have the testimony of infidels themselves. The first and most formidable objection they urge against the Gospel is, that it is incomprehensible, and full of mysteries; while, at the same time, they acknowledge that if it be a truth it is a momentous one, involving the deepest interests of man. And what is paradoxical in all this is, that they withal pronounce upon it as a human invention, by stigmatizing it with the epithets of "priestcraft," and "imposture."

5. Let us examine then a little more minutely these evidences of the Divinity of its institution.

The FOUNDATION of the Church is of God:—"Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone."—"The stone which the builders rejected the same is become the head of the corner."—"This is the Lord's doings, and it is marvellous in our eyes."—"For other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid, which is Christ Jesus the Lord."—"Neither is there salvation in any other, for there is none other name given under heaven among men whereby we must

be saved."—"To him all the prophets gave witness;" and in him all the saints repose their trust. As the object of their faith, he is "God manifested in the flesh." He is, in the language of inspiration, their "light and their salvation." And without him they have no hope. That Christ is the acknowledged foundation of the Church, is equally evident from the spirit and conduct of all descriptions of its enemies. In his character and claims is contained the secret antagonist principle against which their malignity is united. "The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the Lord and against his anointed."—"For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together." Such has been the spirit of opposition to the true Church of God from the beginning. Christ, its foundation, has been the object of the deadly hate of all its enemies, as he has been the object of the supreme trust of all its friends. As the foundation of the Church, he is the mighty God—God manifested in the flesh, who by the sacrificial offering of himself, purchased it with his own blood. What is there in this economy of redemption which bears marks of human device? To the Jews, the preaching of the cross was a stumbling-block, and to the Greeks it was foolishness. To infidels of all descriptions it has ever been the one or the other. "Their rock is not our rock, our enemies themselves being judges." The Church is not founded then "in the wisdom of men, but in the wisdom of God, in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom" of God.—"For eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him." Through Christ and him crucified we enjoy all spiritual blessings. And without this foundation there is no Church.

6. Again, let us view the agency and instrumentality employed in the institution and edification of the Church. Are there marks of human invention here? "Holy men spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."—"God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will." These powers men could not impart, nor yet that of predicting future events. They were of God. The instruments employed were in themselves feeble and fallible. Would worldly policy have dictated to the choice of unlearned and ignorant men to build up an institution of such magnitude in the earth? And could such have succeeded? But God chose the weak of this world to confound the mighty, that his power might be manifest in the work. Moreover, what is there in the ordinances and economy of the Church, which human reason would suggest to secure respect for the institution, and give it perpetuity? They can have such an effect only in consideration of their being instituted by him who harmonizes all his works in infinite wisdom.

7. But we have yet another view to take of this subject. It is a consideration of the power of the Gospel, and the direct influences of the Spirit, by which sinners are awakened and converted, and saints edified together. In nothing does the work of Christ appear more interesting, so far as the establishment of his kingdom upon earth is concerned, than in the provision he made for the preaching of the Gospel, and its efficacy in reforming guilty man. The first

ministers of the Gospel were themselves partakers of its spirit. "The love of Christ constraineth us," was the rational account they gave of the strong impulse of feeling which carried them forward in their labors, "through evil as well as through good report." They preached "the Gospel with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven." It was "not in word only, but in power and in much assurance." The profligate were reformed, and whole communities, brought under its influence, were changed from all that was vile and degrading to all that was lovely and of good report. This evident effect, which was everywhere witnessed, was triumphantly urged as testimony of its Divine efficacy. "I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ," said the Apostle Paul, "for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth." The same preaching of the cross which was "to the Jews a stumbling-block, and to the Greeks foolishness," to those who believed became "the power of God, and the wisdom of God." Here the friends of the Gospel may take a triumphant stand. Little of human skill as skeptics are willing to award to the ministers of Christ, they must acknowledge that an influence attends the Gospel which the sublimest eloquence cannot produce. Respecting religious excitements, pretending philosophers take it upon themselves to speculate, and pronounce many an unphilosophical and foolish judgment. But we ask them to produce a similar excitement,—one which will show the same state of feeling, and result in the same consequences. They may call it moving of the passions; so be it. Let them so move the passions, and carry forward the subjects of their exciting efforts to the enjoyment of those strong consolations and manly hopes which will enable them to brave the storms of persecution, and rejoice in death. Here we rest the issue, and challenge the trial. "The God that answereth by fire, let him be God." The evidences of the power of religion on the heart, and the direct influences of the Spirit in producing it, will ever stand as incontrovertible testimony that this work is of God, and not of man. This is "the Spirit which giveth life." Hence the apostle says, "You hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and in sins."—"He that believeth, though he were dead, yet shall he live." The Church is built of "lively stones," and therefore, to use another figure, the members of Christ's body are living members. "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." It is this mysterious principle of spiritual life which gives animation and energy to the Church.

8. This thought carries us back to first principles, namely, that the Church has its foundation in the Messiah, according to the promise. He is the source of life to the living members of his body. This life they enjoy through faith. "The just shall live by faith." This truth is illustrated by the Saviour himself in various figures and forms of expression. "I am the vine," said he, "and ye are the branches; as the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me."—"If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered." St. Paul applies this to the Jewish Church, showing thereby, that that Church was not an independent institution, but only a branch, of which Christ is the root, according to the terms of the Abrahamic covenant; and that it enjoyed life only while it continued in union

with him by faith; but was rejected when it became separated by unbelief. "If the root be holy, so are the branches; and if some of the branches be broken off, and thou, being a wild olive tree, wert grafted in among them, and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive tree, boast not against the branches; but if thou boast, thou bearest not the root, but the root thee;—because of unbelief they (the Jews) were broken off, and thou standest by faith. Be not high minded, but fear; for if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he also spare not thee." How awful are these declarations! they show the work of God in the constitution of the Church as embracing the mysterious union of the principle of life with the external organization, by which the branches are made to live, and flourish, and bear fruit, and that too by faith in *Christ*. In every view of it, how interesting does the Church appear as *God's own work*?

II. The Church is an object of interest to the pious heart, in consideration of the value which God himself has set upon it.

1. It is represented in the Scriptures as distinct and separate from all other institutions, to manifest the glory of God among men. Its friends and its enemies, or, in other words, its true spiritual members, and those who are not, form the two great opposing parties in the world. No distinctions of moral character and feeling are more strongly marked than those by which these great parties are discriminated. "He that is not with me," said the Saviour, "is against me."—"If ye were of the world the world would love its own; but because I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you."—"Ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake." Such too was the testimony of the prophets. From the days of wicked Cain, unregenerate men have shown their deep and deadly hostility against the scriptural worship of the true God. Hence idolatry and will-worship have been substituted in its place; or infidelity has abjured it altogether. With both the pious and the profane, the Church of God and the cause of God have always been deemed the same, and their interests so identified, that in common language they are convertible terms. The pious, having declared in favor of God and his cause, and made an unqualified surrender of their affections and their lives to him, cannot but feel a deep and lively interest in the success of that institution whose prosperity is calculated above every thing else to restrain the current of vice, and in whose adversity the wicked malignantly triumph. The shouts and triumphs of the enemy render them inconsolable, even when their own unfaithfulness is the cause of their calamities. "They that carried us away required of us a song; and they that wasted us required of us mirth; saying, Sing us one of the songs of Zion."—"How can we sing the Lord's song in a strange land?"—Thus oppressed Israel wept, and said, "By the rivers of Babylon there we sat down, yea, we wept when we remembered Zion: we hanged our harps upon the willows in the midst thereof." They wept because they still loved Zion. Deep and deadly must be the depravity of that apostate who can prefer the profane scoffings of the wicked to the tender sensibilities which a remembrance of the house of God is calculated to inspire. "If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning," said the psalmist, "if

I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth ; if I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy."

2. These feelings of affectionate regard which the people of God cherish for his cause, especially in times of oppression and adversity, are as rational as they are sincere and pungent. They love God, and they love his Church on his account. Viewing it as the object upon which he has set his love, and for whose defence he has pledged his name and his honor, their sensibilities are alive to every thing calculated to expose it to scandal, or impair its energies.

It was with special reference to his worship upon earth, as established by himself, and for the honor of his name, that he wrought wonders among his ancient people, to the terror and dismay of their enemies. For this he brought them up out of the land of Egypt with a high hand, and overthrew their enemies with a mighty arm. For this he gave them bread and water in the wilderness, and subdued their more powerful enemies before them—enemies who, dismayed at what they saw and heard of the wonderful doings of the God of Jacob, were seized with fear, and covered with confusion. "He hath not beheld iniquity in Jacob," said Balaam to terrified Balak, "neither hath he seen perverseness in Israel ; the Lord his God is with him, and the shout of a King is among them ; God hath brought them out of Egypt. He hath as it were the strength of a unicorn. Surely there is no enchantment against Jacob, neither is there any divination against Israel ; according to this time shall it be said of Jacob, What hath God wrought !" For this too God gave commandment to his people to avoid idolatrous communion with the profane, and to destroy false worship out of the land. "Thus shall ye deal with them ; ye shall destroy their altars, and break down their images, and cut down their groves, and burn their graven images with fire ; for thou art a holy people unto the Lord thy God ; the Lord thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth."

3. The illustrious worthies of ancient times manifested their strong affection for the work of God in the institutions of his worship, by openly observing his ordinances in the face of danger and of death. Elijah boldly challenged the pampered hosts of national idolatry to a trial of their conflicting systems of worship by an appeal to miraculous interposition, knowing that his life was the forfeiture of a failure. Moses chose to suffer affliction with the people of God, in open defence of the institution of his worship, rather than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season. Daniel prayed to his God, with his windows open toward Jerusalem, thereby professing his unshaken attachment to the holy place ; while he knew that for so doing he should be cast into the den of lions. So also did the three Hebrews, many of the prophets, the apostles, and an army of holy martyrs, boldly adhere to the worship of the true God, in defiance of the persecutions and tortures with which they were everywhere menaced. With such examples of firm and unshaken attachment to God and his worship, in conformity to his own institutions, the Scriptures and the early history of the Church abound. These examples we would earnestly recommend to the serious consideration of those who think they can serve God ac-

ceptably, unconnected with his Church, or without any concern for its prosperity. If any reliance is to be placed upon the testimony of Scripture, or the examples of former times, in this matter, we are authorized to affirm, that an abatement of our love for the Church of God and the ordinances of his house, is a sure indication of an abatement of our love to him. Such was the sin of Peter, which caused him to weep bitterly. "I know not the man," said he, in an evil hour of temptation and trial. Feeble indeed was his faith. And in what light would his character have stood at this day had he persisted in disclaiming the responsibility of an open profession of connection with Christ and his people? God would have left him to the error of his ways. The good man cannot separate, in the object of his affections, Christ and his Church. His love for the one will induce him always to feel a lively interest in the honor and the prosperity of the other, and to manifest such feeling by earnestly praying and laboring for its prosperity, whatever sacrifice and self-denial it may cost him.

4. There is another consideration which causes the good man to feel a deep interest in the healthy state and efficient success of the Church. It is its conservatory moral influence in the world. "Ye are the salt of the earth," said the blessed Saviour to his followers. Men may say what they choose, and they *will* say what they choose, of the effects of religion upon the great question of morality. But there are few things said, by even those "who love and make a lie," so palpably insulting to the honest convictions which the testimony of facts produce in candid minds, as the insinuations which are often thrown out, that Christianity is of immoral tendency. They who venture such insinuations are conscious themselves of their absurdity, and therefore produce only such examples as, in other connections, they call hypocrites and deceivers. But our purpose does not require us to be detained here. The truth, that the practice and spirit of holiness among professors of piety exert a more powerful restraining influence than all other causes combined, needs no proof. It is everywhere evident. The abatement of piety and the prevalence of vice are simultaneous occurrences in any community. That the love of many waxes cold when "iniquity abounds," is no more true than that iniquity abounds when "the love of many waxes cold." They act conjointly, and are inseparable. But it is worth while to inquire, In what does the conservative principle of the Church consist? Is it in the form of its worship,—the purity of its creed,—or the rectitude of its moral code,—either or all of these exclusively? Surely not. Each of these has its place and its use. But apart from the spirit of holiness, all of them combined are ineffectual. "If the salt have lost its savor, it is henceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out and trodden under foot of men." It is the savor of the salt which preserves. The same is true of the Church. The spirit of holiness, existing in the hearts and manifested in the lives and tempers of its members, spreads a conservative influence throughout the body with which they are connected. Strange that even men of the world have not seen and acknowledged this. They resort to a thousand expedients for the suppression of immorality, and affect to deplore it as destructive of peace and happiness; but they close their eyes to the fact which all experience

confirms, that the prevalence of pure and undefiled religion is the surest—the only safe protection against moral corruption in the world. It sanctifies talents, and renders them available, where they are splendid; and more than half supplies the deficiency where they are not. The strong moral influence of a Fenelon, a Baxter, and a Wesley, was impressed upon the nations and ages in which they lived. The piety of even a solitary and unpretending individual throws a restraint around all who come within the circle of his limited sphere. Such too is the combined influence of the Church when it walks in the light of the Lord. “Who is this that cometh up from the wilderness, leaning upon her beloved; clear as the sun, fair as the moon, and terrible as an army with banners?”—“Strong in the Lord and in the power of his might,” the sacramental hosts control the morality of the communities in which they live. So it was in all ancient time. The history of the Jewish nation confirms this fact. When the rulers and the people walked in the fear of the Lord, truth and righteousness prevailed; but when they departed from him, neither the purity of their law, nor their forms of worship, could stay the flood of impiety, injustice, and oppression, which came rolling in upon them. Deep piety—that which sanctifies the heart and controls all the affections, is the salt which alone can preserve the Church, and save the world from moral rottenness and ruin.

5. To this truth God has set his seal. Where justice calls for speedy destruction upon a guilty community, for the sake of the righteous he spares it. Ten only were required to save the corrupt mass of profligate Sodom. And though ten were not found, God so much respected his own constitution of things, in rendering the righteous the salt of the earth, that he destroyed not this deeply depraved people until righteous Lot was removed from among them. Nor could he destroy the Jews themselves, until the salt had entirely lost its savor. “When, therefore, ye shall see the abomination of desolation, then let him which is in Judea flee to the mountains; let him which is on the house-top not come down to take any thing out of his house; neither let him which is in the field return back to take his clothes.” Let all the savor of the salt be extracted, that God may effect the work of destruction. O how little the world think of their indebtedness to the righteous, the people whom they persecute and despise! What would society be, if all that is holy and divine were removed from it—if there were no devout worshippers—none to offer up prayer to God, or to acknowledge his mercies with deep-felt gratitude of heart! There are those—and we have them among us—who avowedly wish for such a state of things. Soon would they deplore it, could their desire be granted. But for the benignant indulgence of the Almighty, on account of the devotions and intercessions of his people, they would too soon reap the fruit of their folly.

As it is true piety which preserves all that is desirable and lovely in the world, and promotes the honor of God, there is no object which so deeply interests the feelings and desires of the good man, as to witness its prevalence. He marks with deep solicitude every symptom of decline in the Church, and prays and labors for its revival and restoration to vigorous health, that all its efficient ener-

gies may be brought to bear upon the salvation of a corrupt and guilty world.

III. This prayer of the prophet shows us under what circumstances the Church becomes especially an object of solicitude to the pious heart.

1. The terms of the prayer are expressive of deep feeling and tender sympathy. The Church appeared to the mind of the prophet in the light of an endeared friend, suffering under the influence of a wasting disease which he saw weakening its energies, and threatening its final dissolution. This figure was a favorite one with the inspired writers, and frequently recurs in the Holy Scriptures. It is most commonly employed to represent the various degrees of morbid affection to which the Church is liable, between a state of perfect health and an entire extinction of the vital flame. Thus it is represented as a dependent, confiding child, under the care and protection of an affectionate parent. "When Israel was a child, then I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt." It is also represented in the tender and endearing relation of a spouse. "Thy Maker is thy husband;" and he hath said, "I will remember my covenant with thee in the days of thy youth." In the vigor of its strength, the Church is represented as "coming up out of the wilderness—terrible as an army with banners." The same figure, as we have noticed, is used by the apostle, in which he represents it as one body, and those united in it, as members one of another. Thus, as God formed man out of the dust of the earth, and breathed in him the breath of life, and he became a living soul; so he formed the Church by his power and wisdom, and animated it by an infusion of the Spirit of life and holiness. And as the body without the spirit is dead, so is the Church without the vital principle of holiness dead also. In this mysterious union of the principle of life with the body, spreading itself through all its members, and imparting an energy to all its faculties, we have a lively and beautiful representation of the Church, as the work of God. And no truth can be more evident than that the Spirit of life is essential to its existence and efficiency.

2. But man is subject to disease; and when under its influence, how alarmingly does it paralyze his energies, and reduce him to a state of inefficiency and helplessness! So it is with the Church. "The whole head is sick, and the whole heart is faint."—"For this cause," said the apostle, "many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep." How readily, and with what anxious forebodings, do we detect the progress of disease in a beloved friend! Though it be slow and insidious, we mark with deep solicitude the train of symptomatic indications of vital decay, until every energy is wasted, and the object of our affectionate regards sinks into the arms of death. How painful is the process to the sensibilities of our nature! No distress is so poignant—no grief so agonizing, as that which arises from seeing a beloved friend sinking down under the influence of disease, and struggling in death, without any power to afford him relief. Recollections of circumstances which have endeared him to us, serve to excite emotions of tender grief; and in the despair which follows our fruitless efforts to save him, we are wont

to utter our feelings of anguish in the language of melancholy exclamation.

Such was the state of feeling under which the prophet uttered this vehement prayer. The Church was the dearest object of his affections upon earth, because he viewed it as that upon which God had set his love, and in defence of which he had pledged the honor of his name. He thought of the effect of its calamitous condition upon surrounding idolatrous nations—of the occasions it would afford for reproach and scandal—of the scoffings and triumphs of the ungodly, and the unbridled reign of wickedness in the land. He thought of all these things, and prayed and wept before the Lord. He had marked with fearful apprehensions the indications of spiritual decline; and, deeply concerned for the result, faithfully administered admonition, warning, and instruction. But all to no purpose. An inveterate disease had spread itself throughout the entire system, and enervated all its powers, so that another prophet exclaimed, "Is there no balm in Gilead; is there no physician there? why then is not the health of the daughter of my people recovered?" With the same emotion of ardent desire commingled with partial despair, he called upon his God, "O Lord, how long shall I cry, and thou wilt not hear! even cry out unto thee of violence, and thou wilt not save! Why dost thou show me iniquity, and cause me to behold grievance?" The answer of God was, "Behold ye among the heathen, and wonder marvellously, I will work a work in your days, a work which ye will not believe, though it be told you: I raise up the Chaldeans, that bitter and hasty nation, which shall march through the breadth of the land, to possess the dwelling places that are not theirs." How appalling this answer! Still love refuses to give up the dying friend. The man of God renews his supplications. His ardor increases with the increasing difficulties in the case; and he appeals to the power and veracity of his God. "Art thou not from everlasting, O Lord my God, mine Holy One? We shall not die. I will stand upon the watch, and set me upon the tower, and watch to see what he will say unto me, and what I shall answer when I am reproved;" what I shall plead to move him to show mercy. He could not—would not give up the object of his pious solicitude, while a gleam of hope remained. If the justice of God stood in the way of a speedy and triumphant deliverance, he still would plead for a mitigation of the merited punishment, and a preservation of the endeared object of his love from utter ruin. "I have heard thy speech," said he, "and was afraid; O Lord, revive thy work." Save thy Church in this day of commotion and trial. "In wrath,"—in the visitation of thy righteous judgments—"remember mercy." Suffer not the vital principle to become extinct. O send forth a quickening influence—the spirit of life and health—to reanimate it, and restore its wasted energies! What an example of love is here! How ardent were the feelings and the supplications of this holy man of God, for the restoration of spiritual influence to the Church! The whole transaction reminds us that to pray acceptably for a revival in the Church, our feelings must be duly impressed with a sense of the importance of it. Alas! how cold and lifeless are many of the prayers offered up in the precise language of the prophet! "O Lord,

revive thy work," has come to be a sort of set phraseology in prayer—a commonplace expression, used often, it is to be feared, without either the understanding or the heart accompanying it. Can such a prayer be availing? Deep and ardent were the feelings of the prophets in their supplications, because they were prompted to them by a rational and moving sense of the condition of those for whom they offered them up. They took in a full view of their condition and their danger—made themselves familiar with the gloomy picture, by intense and constant meditation—suffered nothing else—no worldly care or speculation, to divert them,—and wrought up their souls to the highest pitch of tenderness and benevolence. Therefore they were mighty in prayer. But how is it with modern professors generally? Do they sink thus deeply into the spirit of devotion? Are their souls thus imbued with the Spirit, and wrought up to the highest point of intensity of feeling for the subjects of their prayers? O, how much of worldly mindedness, indifference, and heart wandering from God and his cause, have professing Christians yet to overcome, before, like the mighty men of old, they will have power with God in prayer!

IV. In the terms of this prayer we are furnished with some important considerations of duty.

1. The figure of a human being is still kept before the mind, whichever way we contemplate the Church as in a state of decline, and a subject of revival. God only can give life and health; each is his own mysterious work; and yet with an abiding sense of our entire and unqualified dependence on him for these inestimable gifts, we have an equally abiding conviction that he preserves neither without our concurrence and care. That life which we cannot give, we may nevertheless destroy. Health is promoted or impaired by means. These truths present themselves intuitively to our minds, and influence our conduct. We know not how it is that wholesome food nourishes life, or that poison destroys it, only that God has so ordained; and he has revealed it in the book of nature that we may be admonished to use the one and avoid the other. In the same way we learn that perpetual abstinence from food will produce weakness of body, and, in the end, death by starvation. Though God gives the life and health which are preserved by the temperate use of the food needful for us, yet the receiving and using of that food, as the means of preserving them, are acts of our own; and we are duly admonished that to neglect these claims of our natural constitutions, must end in death. But our health and life may be endangered by the neglect of others. There are periods in the history of our mortal existence, when these interests are confided to others. The child in early life depends much upon the prescriptions of parents and others, to whom its physical training is intrusted, in regard to its nourishment. A nurse may administer a slow poison instead of wholesome diet, and the unsuspecting innocent may be trained to contract such a fondness for it, as ever after, while it lives, obstinately to prefer it above the wholesome aliment of life, whatever be the consequences. Of this we have a melancholy exemplification in the multitudes who are brought in the nursery to love strong drink. Under the influence of sickness, too, prescriptions are regulated by others, rather than ourselves.

How fearfully responsible is the office of a physician, or a surgeon, or even a nurse, in a chamber of sickness! How much depends upon both their skill and their disposition to use it!

But a far more fearful responsibility rests upon ministers and members of the Church of Christ. We pray for a revival of the Church—for the spiritual life and health of the religious body. But are we aware how much this depends upon ourselves, in the various offices we sustain in it? Not indeed that we can produce the least emotion of life, or in any way control the Spirit by which alone it can be produced and sustained. But God has shown us what course of conduct he will honor by accompanying it with his Spirit, and what he will not. And to expect he will produce the end while we neglect the means, is the folly of antinomianism. As well might we expect he would preserve the life of a friend, to whom we deny necessary food, or feed with poisonous drugs, or pierce to the heart with a dagger. Those feelings of tender regard for the Church, which will induce us to pray sincerely for its revival, will induce us also to labor for such revival. And we act inconsistently, and evidently insincerely, if we do the one without the other. Look at that son who is weeping bitterly over the emaciated form of a dying father! He seems deeply affected on his account. But his own neglect is the cause of his father's untimely death! Are his expressions of sorrow sincere? No one believes them so. Look at those parents who are pleading with the physician to save their child's life. Is that child dying because they have neglected to give it necessary food, or have fed it with poison? Are they sincere? Who can believe it? Are then professing Christians sincere who incessantly employ this deeply interesting prayer of the prophet, while they live in habitual neglect of those duties which God requires in order to the fulfilment of it? I will leave their own consciences to answer.

2. I must beg indulgence here. The subject is practical, and leads to a consideration of that disciplinary process upon which so much depends in maintaining a healthy action in the system. The body is constituted of its different members, in their union with the head; and these members have their different and appropriate offices. Thus the apostle represents the Church, in his Epistle to the Corinthians. A disease may be local, and more or less dangerous to the safety of the body, as it more or less approximates to the vital organs, and sympathizes with them. But if disease exist in one or more of the members, such is the organization of the body, and such the sympathy of the affiliated parts, that when one suffers, all suffer with it. To preserve the health of the body, therefore, the first and most important object, is to attend to the guarding and nurturing of its individual members. This brings the subject of responsibility directly home. Every member is charged with a particular care of itself. This is a paramount consideration, and of the first importance in the nature of the subject; but the last, it is to be feared, in the estimation of many who are most deeply interested in it. How many there are who are endlessly deploring errors and indications of spiritual decline in others, while they show no concern about themselves.

We hear much on the subject of discipline, and most perhaps

from those who least understand the wide range of duties and responsibilities it involves. They seem to think that it begins and ends with a vigorous administration of the rules of trial and expulsion from the Church. Where there are no excommunications—no cases of censure for delinquency or crime, and decided action resulting in the excommunication of members, in their estimation there is no discipline. Views and feelings like these betray such a want of mental and moral culture, as must disqualify those who cherish them from performing any useful part in the great work of nurturing and edifying the Church of Christ. The object of that discipline which aims at the orderly government and efficient operations of the Church, in carrying into effect the purposes for which it is instituted, comprehends all the means and measures which tend to give a healthy action to the members of the body, severally and jointly. It has its beginning, therefore, with the individual members; and he is the most faithful and successful disciplinarian, who sees to it that his own heart is first brought into submission to the will of Christ, and himself subjected to those rules of orderly conduct in the observance of which his soul will acquire the greatest degree of spiritual strength.

3. In view of sustaining the place and discharging the functions of a healthy member in the body of Christ, regard must be had to the provisions which God has made for the sustenance of the soul. This thought is not wholly analogical—it is clearly suggested in the Scriptures. The apostles speak of the doctrines of the Gospel as the food of the soul, and direct that they be used in a way to impart strength to those who receive them. "I have fed you with milk," said Paul to the Corinthians, "and not with meat, for hitherto ye have not been able to bear it." It appears in this connection, that by some error of their own, they had either neglected the spiritual nutriment furnished them, or improperly used it, or mingled with it that which was injurious; so that, when they should have been strong men, they were yet children, weak and helpless. Is there not much reason to fear that from similar causes many of the members of Christ's Church remain thus weak and sickly all the days of their lives? God has graciously provided for our souls such spiritual nourishment as is suited to the various conditions of our Christian experience. "Strong meat is for them that are of full age." To such, "a portion is to be given to each one in due season." St. Peter illustrates and applies this figure in a beautiful manner. "Wherefore," says he, "laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and evil-speakings, as new-born babes desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby; if so be that ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious; to whom coming as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious, ye also as lively stones are built a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God, by Jesus Christ." Every term here is full of interest. We are taught that our spiritual experience, as the children of God, commences in *tasting* that the Lord is gracious; that to acquire strength we need the sincere milk of the word; which implies literally that we lay aside, or studiously avoid, guilt, malice, hypocrisies, and envies,—the evils which early supervene to vitiate

our spiritual tastes, and continue to adhere to the sincere and self-denying doctrines of the cross, by which alone we can "be strengthened with might in the inner man;" and all this is to be done in view of our becoming healthy and useful members in the communion of Christ's Church. Here, then, is one important point to which attention is to be paid in contemplating the means of promoting health and vigor in the Church. A Church made up of members who perceive no distinction between truth and error—between the sincere milk of the word, and the poison which is often artfully mingled with it, can never be other than in a diseased state.

4. It appears proper in this place to make another remark. God has set his ministers as the guardians of the flock in this matter. "Simon," said the Saviour, "feed my lambs,—feed my sheep." Awfully responsible charge! In this delicate work begins the pastor's care. It is his first and principal business to "feed the Church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood." On this the health and prosperity of its members essentially depend. Feed them, not with the husks of empty and unsubstantial theories of worldly wisdom, but with the pure word of God, the food that is profitable for them. The soul is represented in the Scriptures, as having the sense of taste; which, if not vitiated, will enable it to discriminate between that which profits it and that which does not. Its sense of spiritual want is beautifully set forth, under the idea of hungering and thirsting; and the plenitude of the provision made to satisfy these desires, is generously exhibited in the liberal invitations we have in the Gospel, to partake freely of the bread and water of life. "Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled."—"Ho! every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters."—"O taste and see that the Lord is good."—"Eat and drink abundantly, O beloved."—"Come, for all things are now ready."

But let us not deceive ourselves. There is what may be called an intellectual taste; and there is a spiritual taste. But these are not identical. The Christian minister has something to study besides the elements of criticism, and something to do other than please the fancy of his people, in qualifying himself for his work, and discharging the duties it involves. The imagination may be feasted while the soul is starved. If we would nourish the spiritual members of the body of Christ, it should be our main object to keep in mind what is suitable and necessary for them. "I am the bread of life," said Jesus. "This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof and not die. I am the living bread which came down from heaven. If any man eat of this bread he shall live for ever; and the bread which I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world. Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day; for my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me and I in him. As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father; so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me." To gross and sensual minds, incapable of discerning spiritual things, this deeply interesting discourse of our blessed Lord contains nothing of importance; but those whose spiritual faculties enable them

to discern its mystical application to the wants of the soul, see in it a plenitude of heavenly grace, which above all other objects they desire. He who will so feed the people of God, as to cause their spiritual growth and prosperity, must furnish for their daily food the soul-sustaining doctrines of the cross. Christ and him crucified—Christ in all his offices—Christ as the atoning sacrifice, offering himself for the sins of a guilty world—Christ exalted as a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance to Israel and the remission of sin—Christ in them the hope of glory—these are the truths, the only truths, which can satisfy and sustain the souls of his people. These truths should constitute the substance of every sermon, every exhortation, every social conversation. They should be the theme of ministers and people in all their intercourse. How lamentably evident is it that all people among whom these truths have been neglected, whatever has been substituted in their place, have withered away and perished like branches separated from a tree. They have no signs of spiritual life left. They may preserve the forms of worship, and partake at the sacred altar of the feast which symbolically represents the Saviour's body as meat indeed, and his blood as drink indeed; but "not *discerning* the Lord's body," they "eat and drink unworthily," and are dead. Let all who will promote the spiritual health of the Church of Christ see to it that they contend earnestly for that faith, which constantly keeps before the mind the sacrificial offering, as the bread of life which cometh down from heaven.

5. To preserve healthy action in the body, moreover, it is required that it be trained to exercise, each member performing its proper functions. Inaction produces imbecility. God has a work for his people to do, and for every individual member of his Church in particular. But it is a spiritual work, and constant spiritual mindedness is necessary for the performance of it. They, therefore, are the most healthy and vigorous members of his Church, who devote themselves most intensely to the work he has assigned them. As in physical education, all the members of the body are to be exercised in their appropriate offices to preserve its symmetry and promote a general healthy action, so it is no small part of the disciplinary process in sustaining the life and vigor of the Church, to keep all its members actively engaged in the work to which God has called them. He is a delinquent disciplinarian who looks with indifference on his charge, while all are idle and inactive; and especially he who will encourage it under the notion that all is peace. He may cry peace and safety; but sudden destruction is at hand! We have no promise of God encouraging us to hope that he will send forth his Spirit of revival in a community who live in habitual neglect of plain incumbent duties. The prayers of such for revival can never be expected to avail.

6. If we desire to witness an increase of life and animation in the Church, we must apply ourselves to the work of preserving it pure from those causes which more directly oppose the influences of the Spirit. We cannot serve God and mammon. Not indeed that it is impossible to attend to our lawful business and keep the mind steadily fixed upon God. This may be done, and is done, so long as the affections are not ensnared by the world. But here is

the danger. "If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." When the mind and the heart become engrossed with the things of the world, no matter what they are, they lose their hold on God and his cause; and indifference to spiritual things follows as a matter of course. To such causes is owing, in a very great degree, the spiritual declension of the present day. Subjects of absorbing interest are agitating the community,—political strife, and speculations for worldly gain—such as no man can enter into without the danger of having all his feelings enlisted; and when these things come to be constant topics of conversation among the members of the Church, and so intensely engage their thoughts as to displace those of a religious nature and tendency, they produce a most deadly influence upon the spirit of piety. To keep the minds of Christians at the farthest possible remove from all things which tend to damp their spiritual ardor, should be the steady object of those who desire a revival of the work of God. In the absence of heavenly mindedness, which cannot consist with the spirit of the world, piety will expire as a lamp un replenished with oil.

The health and vigor of the body are promoted by a careful training of the members under a regular and uniform disciplinary process to mutual edification.

7. The analogical view we are taking of this subject suggests the importance of a faithful exercise of discipline to keep the Church clear from corrupt members. As diseased members of the human body endanger the general health of it, if they be not cured, or in due time separated from it, so unsound members of the Church become deleterious to it unless they are restored to soundness or cut off from communion with it. It is then a question of weighty importance, how long such members should be permitted to remain in connection with the body, and at what period they should be excluded. Reason and analogy unite to say that the amputation of a member should be resorted to only as an alternative to save the life, or preserve the general health of the body. So grave a work as the amputation of a member, and one resulting in consequences so serious to both the body and the member concerned, can never be decided upon hastily, or despatched with careless indifference, by any who are affected with the common sympathies of our nature. In the work of excluding from the Church such members as are deemed to be unworthy of communion in it, there are two extremes into which we are exceedingly liable to fall; the one is too much indulgence, the other is too little patience and forbearance. Both have their origin in a disposition to avoid the labor and patience of endeavoring to save the diseased member by kind efforts and judicious treatment. What does analogy suggest in this matter? "If thy hand or thy foot offend thee," said Christ, "cut it off, and cast it from thee." But when cut it off? What must be the nature and extent of the cause of offence, to justify so severe a sentence against it? When it obviously endangers the body; "for it is better for thee to enter into life halt or maimed, rather than having two hands or two feet, to be cast into everlasting fire." But who would decide upon cutting off a hand or a foot, though deeply diseased, until he had made every possible effort to restore it to soundness? Such rashness would soon destroy the body. Much injury results

to the Church from a similar rashness in the treatment of members. From a prevailing aversion to that patient perseverance which is necessary to soothe the irritation of morbid excitement in morally diseased members, or to restore them from the deathlike inaction into which they have been thrown by spiritual decline, the shortest and most speedy method of ridding the Church of them, is in some cases rashly resorted to. And when members are so excluded, it too often occurs, that due care is not taken to heal the wounds which are occasioned by the process. Hence instead of preserving the general health of the body, it is much reduced and weakened by it. Such was the complaint of the prophet. It was of the Church he said, "From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it; but wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores;" and the cause is assigned thus:—"They have not been closed, neither bound up, neither mollified with ointment." Alas! how much mischief arises from the narrow view which some men take of the exercise of discipline! "Cut off the dry branches,"—"clear away the rubbish,"—"the dead members are only a curse to the Church,"—"it can never prosper until they are put out of it," and many other expressions of a similar import, indicate their tone of feeling, and the contractedness of their views in this matter. That the unsound members must be separated from the body when they become incurably diseased, all agree. But the single act of separation is not all that is to be done. It is indeed only a small part of the duty which the living are to perform. The general health of the body must be attended to, that it may have strength to bear the shock of so severe a treatment as is the amputation of a member. The tone of life in a body, which is capable of suffering the loss of a member by amputation without much painful feeling, is irrecoverably low; and that Church which can have a member separated from it by an act of expulsion, without painful feeling, is dead, irrecoverably dead. Moreover, care is to be had for the member. Expulsion, we say, is the last resort to save the body. Consequently it is to be decided upon only when every effort to save the member under treatment has failed. And then, when the diseased member is separated, more intense care is necessary to preserve the body. No member was ever separated from a living body without occasioning a wound that needed attention to heal it. Neglect it, and what must be the consequence? "Putrifying sores,"—the strong figure of the prophet, furnishes an awful answer. O the "closing," the "binding up," the "mollifying with ointment," how necessary! how much neglected!

But in faithfulness I must add, the opposite extreme is perhaps as prevalent, and equally dangerous. Suffer diseased members to remain in the body too long, and they will contaminate the whole of it. No object presents a more melancholy picture than the friend whose whole system is affected with a deadly cancer, which at first appeared on his hand, or his foot, or elsewhere. Time was, when, by separating the diseased part, even after efforts to cure it had proved unavailing, he might have escaped the destructive issue. But now it is too late. The whole system is vitiated by it, and he must die. Such is the condition of a religious community in which, invariably, corrupt members are retained. The disease is diffused

through the whole body, and all its energies are wasted by it. It is the duty of the Church strictly to maintain that discipline over its members which is necessary to preserve it from moral corruption and consequent death. But this duty is to be performed with all that deliberation with which we would decide upon parting with a diseased hand or foot, and with all that sympathy of feeling which such a decision would be calculated to produce. When the Saviour was about to pronounce sentence of excommunication against the Jews, after he had long labored for their salvation, he wept over them. Such should be the feelings of his people. The expulsion of a single member furnishes an occasion, not of triumph, but of weeping. To a revival of the Church of God, it is necessary that the corrupt and contaminating members of it be removed. This is a duty—a painful duty—which the living members have to perform. If they love the Church, of which they form a part, they will feel that this duty is essential to that revival for which they pray. How preposterous would it be for a man to pray for the preservation of his life, and an increase of health and strength, and at the same time carelessly weaken the energies of his body by recklessly cutting off members which might be cured, or obstinately retaining diseased ones which could not. We have evidently something to do, as ministers and members of the Church of Christ, in preserving it from moral disease and spiritual death.

The members were never organized and arranged in this mystical body, to mangle and destroy one another, but to feel for each other, and be mutually helpful in promoting the spiritual prosperity of the whole. "If ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another." While we pray for revival, let us not forget that we pray in vain, if we at the same time neglect our duty toward God and his Church. And this perhaps is the reason we are so often disappointed in our expectations. We desire a revival of the work of God, and persuade ourselves that, as he is a God that heareth prayer, we have only to ask and we shall receive; forgetting that we may ask amiss—that in the neglect of these plain and rational duties, which God requires us to perform for the spiritual welfare of the Church, we have no right to expect he will answer our prayer.

V. The language of this prayer implies a sense of entire dependence on God for all spiritual influence.

1. After we have done all our duty, in endeavoring to promote the spiritual welfare of the Church, we feel that God alone can revive it. "Paul may plant, and Apollos water, but it is God that giveth the increase."—"The Spirit giveth life;" therefore, "salvation is of the Lord." These truths are truly evangelical, and should be always present in our minds, both when we labor in the cause of God, and when we pray for a revival of his work. "Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it." Honest and pious laborers, while they toil in their field, yet trust in God for success. Hence they pray intelligibly, "Give us this day our daily bread." The anxious parent lingers at the bedside of the sick child, and does all in his power for its recovery; but he feels at the same time that he has no power to preserve its life, or restore its lost energies. For this he looks to God, and to him alone. In the same

spirit of entire dependence upon him does the humble Christian pray for a revival of his work. The immediate object of his prayer is the outpouring of the Spirit, to quicken and sanctify his people, and give them to enjoy "the healthful influence of his grace."

2. In this we are strongly encouraged by the promises of God. He has declared his willingness to revive his people. He loves them for his name's sake; and solicits the return of those who have departed from him. In terms of great tenderness he says to Ephraim, "how can I give thee up;" and to backsliding Israel, "return unto me and I will heal your backslidings." The remedy is ample. "With his stripes we are healed." That the manifestations of God's grace are to be looked for first and principally in the Church, quickening and animating its members, and producing a healthy action in the body, is in accordance with the entire language of the Scriptures. "The salvation of the Lord cometh out of Zion." To send out its healing streams, the fountain must exist there. The state of holiness in the Church is exceedingly partial, viewed in the light of the promises and privileges of the Gospel. Were all who name the name of Christ "sanctified wholly throughout soul, body and spirit"—were all, like the disciples of ancient times, "filled with the Holy Ghost,"—were "every thought brought into captivity to the will of Christ," and every faculty of soul and body consecrated to his service—attainments by no means impossible—what a mighty influence would the Church exert in the world! For this we pray in the language of the text.

3. It will be perceived that in this we acknowledge the direct operations of the Spirit. And why should we not? Explode this truth from the Gospel, and we are prepared to give up all the rest. "The kingdom of God is not meats and drinks, but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost." The influence of the Spirit is efficacious upon the heart, producing the fruits of righteousness in the subjects of it. Their souls are deeply rooted and grounded in love. They daily grow in grace, and become more heavenly minded—more abstracted from the world—more given up to God and his service. "They walk, as seeing him that is invisible,"—"walk by faith, and not by sight." Being "dead to the world and alive to God through Jesus Christ,"—"they have their conversation in heaven," and "account the sufferings of this present life not worthy to be compared to the glory which shall be revealed," while they steadily "look, not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen." They are "strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might." In their prayers, they have access to God, and prevail. Their example, exhortations and labors of love, all carry with them an energy, and are attended by an unction, which even strangers to piety feel and acknowledge. Having no vain ambition to gratify, they are always prepared, as the children of God, to exert an influence in promoting peace and good will among all men. They never trifle with the infirmities of others, but pity them; and never rejoice in the calamities of others, but "weep with those that weep." Having their own corrupt passions subdued, they avoid giving offence to others, or making others offenders for slight causes. "They have the mind of Christ." Such are sanctified believers. And in a perfectly healthy state, such would

be all the members of the Church of Christ. For this we pray in the language of the text. "O Lord, revive thy work."

4. Such a state of strong and vigorous piety in the Church, tends to the promotion of revival in all its branches. A sanctified Christian cherishes a strong desire for the prosperity of Zion, and the salvation of the world. He is prepared to make any sacrifices, and to perform any services, for the accomplishment of these objects. The meekness of his spirit and the ardor of his zeal, commend his piety, and tend to induce similar feelings in the community with which he is connected. His concern for the cause he loves, keeps his feelings alive to its interests. His grief is deep and poignant when Zion languishes. He rejoices in all her prosperity. Urged on by such an impulse of feeling, he practically says, "for Zion's sake I will not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth." Now who can doubt, that if all the members of Christ's Church were thus sanctified to God, and ardent in his service, it would produce a powerful effect upon the irreligious world? Few would be unmoved; few, it is believed, would remain unconverted to God. More of the responsibility of the obstinacy and wickedness which exist in the world, falls upon professors of religion than they are aware of, or are perhaps willing to allow.

But sanctified Christians have power with God in prayer. This is a favor to which he has been pleased in great and condescending goodness to raise them. "Whatsoever ye ask the Father in my name," said the Saviour, "I will give it you." They ask in faith, nothing doubting; and their prayers are availing. Witness Moses pleading for offending Israel. "Let me alone," said the Almighty, "that my wrath may wax hot against them, and that I may consume them." Though justice called for speedy vengeance, the divine approbation with which he was pleased to look upon the supplication of his servant, induced him to "let the lifted thunder drop." Witness Samuel, and Elijah—the prophets and apostles, and a host of worthies who by mighty prayer prevailed with God to stay his threatened judgments, and visit the people with mercy and salvation. Think not that this privilege was limited to times of old, and to the inspired instruments of God's revelation only. It is common to the saints. The power to work miracles was a special gift, and imparted for special purposes. But the privilege of prayer is common to "all who love God with pure hearts fervently." And success in it depends upon the devotedness of heart with which it is offered up, and the degree of faith attending it. The absence of these is the true cause why our prayers are unavailing. They are empty words. We draw near to God with our lips, while our hearts are far from him. When we ask we do not expect to receive. We repeat again and again the prayer of the prophet, "O Lord, revive thy work," without any deep feeling of what we utter, or sincere belief that we shall realize an answer. Very different would be the effect if all these supplications were attended by the strong faith of a sanctified heart. Were the tone of piety in the Church elevated to the standard exhibited in the examples of such holy men as Stephen, and John, and many others of their time,

then would righteousness go forth out of Zion as brightness, and salvation as a lamp that burneth.

VI. In the intelligent use of the words of the text, we pray also for the influences of the Spirit of grace in the awakening and conversion of sinners.

1. I have noticed that many probably confine their thoughts to this point only, when they use these words in prayer; and, therefore, they can be understood as asking in this individual petition for nothing more; for that cannot be supposed to be a particular object of desire in prayer which one does not think of while praying. Hence the importance of entering upon this duty with a mind duly prepared by previous meditation, and of clearly comprehending, and calmly weighing, every expression used in our supplications. When the mind fully comprehends the object, and the feelings of the soul are drawn out in desire for its accomplishment, then it is that our prayers are both rational and sincere.

The intelligent Christian, who looks upon the Church of God as his work—who loves it for his sake—who knows and feels the importance of its spirituality to preserve it from scandal and render it useful—and who understands the divine economy of establishing righteousness and truth in the earth through its instrumentality, will embrace it, especially in his supplications for an extension of the Redeemer's kingdom in the earth; and the consequence of reviving influence in the Church, as an effect invariably connected with it, the awakening and conversion of sinners, is present in his mind and forms a part of the object of his prayer. I could not assume this strong ground were it not supported by strong evidence. But it is the order of God, as the uniform history of his marvellous works will show; and who will contend against him? I do not assume that there are no instances of gracious influence in the awakening and conversion of sinners, apart from the Church, or from a revival in it. God may work independently of apparent means, and often does, though rarely if ever among those who are within the range of the influence of professing Christians, without commencing it in their hearts. But what I affirm is, that a genuine and deep revival in the Church, quickening and rousing professors, and bringing their graces into lively action, will be followed by awakenings among their neighbors. So it ever has been; and, therefore, for the best reason that can be adduced to attest any fact, we are authorized to believe it will be so.

2. I cannot well illustrate my subject without a little particular explanation on this point. To the religious excitements of which we speak, distinguished principally by what I have denominated the awakening and conversion of sinners, common use has appropriated the terms "revival," "work of God," "work of revival," &c. I have no disposition to object to this, since it is understood what is meant; nor yet to the propriety of so using these terms. Every kind and degree of religious influence, in the hearts of saints or sinners, is a work of God; and all such influence is, in its degree and tendency, a revival. So that they who pray for a revival, or a work of God in the awakening and conversion of sinners, pray correctly and intelligibly; but they evidently do not comprehend all that was embraced in the prayer of the prophet. Yet the prayer

of the prophet, understood as we have explained it, comprehends all that is implied in the common use of the term "revival," and in its most enlarged sense. Let the Church experience the revival prayed for by the prophet—let all her members become "strong in the Lord"—let a quickening and healthful influence become universal, so as to bring grace into lively and vigorous exercise, and who will venture to estimate the extent of influence in the awakening and conversion of sinners which would most assuredly follow?

3. Such we have said is the order of God. There are some instances, it is true, in which it is less evident than in others. Remarkable occurrences of the outpourings of the Spirit upon communities, seemingly careless and stupid, occasionally mark the ways of God. This fact we must admit, as it has come under our own observation. Within the circle of my knowledge, but a few years ago, while the young people of a town in which there was little attention paid to religion, were collected in different places to celebrate an annual festival, and indulging in all the hilarity of the occasion, by a sudden and simultaneous impression their merriment was changed into seriousness, and their mirth into solemn prayer; and a general revival ensued. Scenes like this cannot have escaped the notice of others who have had the opportunity and inclination to observe, to any considerable extent, the phenomena of religious excitements which have been prevalent in our own country. These are his marvellous works, and serve to show that in the kingdom of his grace, as in that of his providence, he displays his sovereignty in sometimes causing the fertilizing showers to descend more plentifully than at others. These are, in the language of Scripture, "times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord." These are seasons of great privilege, when God is evidently and eminently near. And to such seasons especially the language of the prophet is applicable, "Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near." Not indeed but that he may be sought and found by sinners in a day of spiritual dearth and darkness. Then they are exhorted, as Paul exhorted the benighted Athenians, to "feel after him if haply they may find him." And even in the day of revival, sinners may resist the Spirit, but not without the greater condemnation.

4. But though there are instances of such extraordinary manifestations of divine influence, in places where there are few professors, and without any visible evidence of their being the result of a special revival in the Church, the fact does not vary our position, that where God has a people—where his Church exists in due form—it is in the order of his economy to commence a work of revival in the hearts of his people, and thereby to render them instrumental in extending its influences abroad. And why should it not be so? "To them are committed the oracles of God." They are intrusted with the Gospel, the mighty instrument which God has ordained for the illumination and salvation of the world; and are charged with the duty of sustaining the faithful preaching of it. The self-denying labors which they must perform in carrying into effect this great system of means, so as to bring it to act at all points upon perverse and rebellious sinners, can never be persevered in with a zeal necessary to render them efficacious, without feelings of strong

and ardent piety. In the absence of this, all is weakness and inefficiency. Where it exists in full vigor, there is force and energy.

Let facts speak. They give strength to our faith. John was "a burning and a shining light." It was the melting influence of his piety—the holiness of his heart and life, more than the celebrity of his eloquence, which produced the great religious excitement that attended his ministry. The spirit of religion is in its nature communicative. The slightest touch of its influence excites a desire that it may be extended. The feelings of Andrew were no sooner excited by his interview with the Saviour, than he sought to enlist those of his brother Simon; and when Philip was brought to follow Christ, he immediately endeavored to persuade Nathaniel to the same course. The quickening influences of the Spirit in every young disciple, at once prompts to acts and efforts for the salvation of others. "The Spirit in the bride says Come." When the apostles and disciples received the effusions of the Spirit at the feast of Pentecost, and from the fulness of their feelings declared the wonderful works of God to the multitude, though some mocked—others, many others, in the bitterness of their souls, cried out, "men and brethren, what shall we do?"

Whatever there was of miracle in their speaking with tongues, that particular influence which produced conviction in the hearts of their hearers, and induced them to seek salvation, was identical with what all sinners feel when awakened by the Spirit of God. Peter indeed affirmed that it was the Spirit which God had promised to pour out upon all flesh.

5. But we must not dwell here. The characteristics of a revival, in all its essential features, are uniform. The first work of the Holy Spirit is to "reprove the world of sin;" and then, to the humble believing soul, it conveys the evidence of pardon and acceptance. The fruits of the change thus produced, appear in the lives of the subjects of it. So it was in the days of the apostles. So it has been in later times. Great and glorious things have been witnessed in our land. "We speak what we know, and testify what we have seen"—an influence bearing down opposition—carrying away the deep-rooted prejudices and antipathies of scoffers,—bringing them to bow down with those they had despised and constraining them to cry aloud for mercy. The impious and the profane have humbled themselves, and become serious and devout. They have expressed the agony of inward grief; and, suddenly, the joys of spiritual consolation; and forthwith shown the most ardent and undying love for the men and the things they had opposed with a deadly hate. Multitudes in the same neighborhood, and at the same time, have passed through these changes. And instances of such general excitements have been numerous in our own age and country. Such events—so strongly marked in all their prominent features—so frequent and evident—present well-attested phenomena for serious investigation and solemn decision. They must be accounted for—they demand explanation. To call the work fanaticism, is a foolish assumption—averse alike to sound philosophy and the testimony of Scripture. It is an explanation without reason, a solution without evidence. To the pious Christian the answer is ready—it is of God.

This work the good man most ardently and intensely desires to

see promoted in the world. Knowing it by its fruits, so far as it is genuine, all the pious feelings of his heart are alive with desire to witness its prevalence. For this he labors, and for this he prays. How important then that he should pray understandingly, and labor in accordance with the order and will of God. Go abroad among professing Christians, and what do you hear? Universal lamentations about the desolations of Zion—the general apathy that prevails in the Churches—and the decline of revivals. And every where in public assemblies, social circles for prayer, and at the family altar, again and again is repeated the prayer of the prophet, “O Lord, revive thy work.” Still we see not those general outpourings of the Spirit which we desire. May it not be profitable for us to inquire seriously—what is the cause? Have we not accustomed ourselves to pray too much in the spirit of Antinomianism? By confining our thoughts to the immediate operations of the Spirit, in the awakening and conversion of sinners, while praying for revival, have we not lost sight of the condition of the Church, and that it is necessary for the work to commence there, to prepare the members of it for those holy exercises of devotion, which seem, in the order of God, incipient and essential in the work for which we pray? Have not professors forgotten themselves in their zeal for the salvation of others? It is possible too, that as ministers and Christians, we may have placed too much confidence in extra efforts, and not enough in God. The expedient of protracted meetings has a show of an increase of zeal for the promotion of the cause of piety. I am not prepared to condemn these means. No doubt in some cases good has resulted from them. In others, perhaps not. The danger of relying on them solely for the desired effect—of trusting to the influence of commanding talents, usually sought to be employed on such occasions—of being brought to depreciate the regular institutions of grace—and more than all of inducing a disposition to neglect the ordinary means of cultivating constant communion with God, by looking forward to such meetings as seasons of special privilege for this purpose, deserve the serious consideration of all who are accustomed to place a high value upon them. Neither these nor any other similar means can originate the spirit of revival. When they are the result of it, they may—they will be productive of good. The spirit of revival, deeply imbuing the souls of Christians, will find means to exert itself. Let the Church be alive to God—let the members of it come together in the fulness of the spirit of the Gospel—having their hearts filled with the love of God, and burning with zeal for the salvation of sinners, and their devotional services, ordinary or protracted, will tell upon the condition and feelings of the people who assemble with them, and the community in which they live. Let this be the preparation for extra efforts, and the result will attest their utility.

6. This is the sum of the whole matter. A revival of the work of God has its commencement in the Church. Its source is in God, and its influence in the spirit of holiness. This is attained, in the order of God, by faith in Christ;—and it is cherished and kept alive, by cleaving to God with all our hearts, in prayer, in watchfulness, in the spirit of abstractedness from the world, in much meditation, and in constant devotedness to the service of God. The Christian's

strength is his piety—deep and ardent piety. The health of his soul is the enjoyment of spiritual life—nourished and sustained by the bread of life—the bread which cometh down from heaven. This imparts strength to all his spiritual faculties. It is holiness—deep and increasing holiness of heart and life—which gives vital energy to good men's efforts, in promoting the cause of piety. No artificial ardor, or temporary preparation, can supply the absence of it. No system of measures, however well concerted, can succeed without it. It is the main-spring which gives motion to the great system of instrumentality, which God in infinite wisdom has devised to carry on his work in the earth. To attempt to promote that work without it, is the sure way to bring it into contempt. This is the true cause of so many failures, and so much consequent scandal. A genuine revival, though it may occasion violent opposition, never wounds or injures the cause. The sincere and unaffected simplicity with which the pious labor for the salvation of their neighbors and friends, so much commends itself to the observation of candor, that it is never alluded to as a cause of reproach. Influenced constantly by a spirit of deep and ardent piety, the devout Christian acts most conformably to his feelings, and therefore most naturally, in all his efforts to do good to others. With the high state of religious experience of which we are capable, how mighty is the influence of one individual in a neighborhood, though he be poor, and unlettered, and otherwise uninfluential in the world: in the cause of God he is a host. What, then, would be the result if all the members of the Church—all the talent and influence in it—were consecrated to God and his service, by the universal prevalence of the spirit of holiness! The contrast is so immense, when compared with any condition of the Church, since the general spread of Christianity, that the mind is dazzled with the thought! Would not the millennial glory then usher in? What good reason can be assigned that the Gospel has not long since succeeded in the salvation of the multitudes who have been brought within the circle of its influence? The evidences of its truth, and the motives to virtue which it holds out, are all that can be required to secure the submission of rational beings. In these there is nothing that the sinner can find it in his heart to allege as a reason to excuse his rejection of God. But his strong support is the backslidings and shortcomings of professors. While they show the same love of the world as other men—an indulgence in the same unholy tempers with other men—the same indifference to moral integrity as other men—and are in no way distinguished from other men, only by a connection with a body of professing Christians, and a zeal to promote the interest of the cause with which they are connected, their unconverted neighbors have daily before them the reasons which secretly operate to confirm them in the perverse unbelief of their hearts. Let all these obstacles be removed—let the world see nothing in professors but what savors of deep and heart-felt piety—let all their conversation be as becometh the Gospel of Christ—and their influence must be irresistible. Unbelief would wither before it. The strong holds of infidelity would give way; and the Gospel, having free course, would accomplish the thing whereunto it is sent.

7. Never was there a time when it behooved Christians to turn their attention to this subject more than at the present. There are elements in operation whose tendency is to unsettle the feelings of the Christian public, and divert professors from the great objects of personal piety and permanent usefulness. We live in an age of excitement. New objects are thrust forward to command our attention and enlist our feelings. The combined energies of conflicting parties in political and polemic strife are employed to entangle the Church of God, and draw to their different interests the sanction of its councils, and the influence of its agency. New and inviting sources of worldly gain are opened in every direction, and motives for speculation are held out at all points. And in the midst of the bustling strife, the sacred friendships long consecrated by Christian communion, are broken in upon, and the bonds of love are dissevered by a spirit of ultraism, which condemns moderation as crime, and acknowledges no virtue that appears not in the tempest, and sympathizes not with the wild projects which are directed by the tameless fury of the whirlwind. Surrounded by all these elements of strife and occasions of danger, how important is it that the souls of God's people should be established by grace. If Christianity—pure and undefiled—be permitted to lose its influence, in the present state of society, all is lost—there is no hope for the nation—no hope for the world—without a renovation. We are not prepared to say that it has lost its influence, or that it is very essentially impaired. If there be a change for the worse, it is evidently in the world. All signs of decline in the Church are temporary. But it does not, and never has, exerted the influence it is destined to, if it arise to the standard of piety pointed out in the word of God as its privilege. How few of the multitudes who profess piety are as devoted and useful as they might be! How few who, like Jeremiah, spend their days and nights in weeping over the sins of the people! How few who, like Samuel, cease not to pray for them! How few who, like Moses, have a prevailing influence at the court of Heaven to avert by their prayers impending evils! How few are “strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might!” Yet the weakness is only comparative. Such strength is the privilege of all—and entire sanctification of soul and body to God would render all his people mighty in their influence to restrain the current of vice and correct the spirit of the times. For this we pray in the language of the text, “O Lord, revive thy work.” Give health and vigor to Zion, by sanctifying the ministry and the membership, and qualifying them for exerting a hallowing influence upon the world. This is a point of deep and absorbing interest. After all the devices and speculations of worldly wisdom, the prevalence of scriptural holiness, and that alone, can harmonize the conflicting elements which threaten the ruin of all that is desirable in society, and bring peace and good will to man. And this is attainable. Other devices, however well concerted, may fail. Holiness is an attainable object. “It is the will of God, even your sanctification.”—“Faithful is he who calleth you, who also will do it.” On other ground Christians are not safe. The world will love its own and them only. Obsequious to its power, its policy, or its spirit, Christians lose their influence and their confidence with God. Their counsels are

despised, and their prayers are unavailing. All terms of compromise with the world, or conformity to it, on the part of Christians, are a surrender of high and important privileges. In so far as we come short of entire sanctification to God, we make such a surrender to the spirit of the world. Herein lies the weakness of the Church—and this is the ground of the exhortation, "Awake! awake! put on thy strength, O Zion; put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem; for great is the Holy One of Israel in the midst of thee."

May God gloriously and universally revive his work, for his mercy's sake. Amen.

PROMINENT CEREMONIES OF THE ROMAN CHURCH AT ROME.

Continued from p. 185.

MAUNDY THURSDAY.

MESSRS. EDITORS:—I concluded my last communication with an account of the washing of the feet of the *Apostoli*, as they are called. The next ceremony in order was the

Dinner.

This was in a part of the great Vatican palace, up two or three flights of stairs from the portico of St. Peter's, and at some distance round a balcony. Desirous to see the whole, we left our ladies to the care of some friends, and threw ourselves into the current of the moving thousands who were pressing upward and onward to the place of *feeding*. Here was a scene of crowding and pushing which exceeded all that I had before experienced. Several times my courage well nigh failed me; and, indeed, I believe I should have given up the enterprise at last, but that, when the severest part of the pressure came, I found it too late to repent, and I had no other alternative but to give myself up to the moving current, and be *carried* onward by volitions and muscular energies other than my own. To give the English credit for all they do, I must say they played the principal part in this drama. On the whole they are the most famous performers in a jamb I ever met with; and what surprised me the more was to see many English *ladies* in the crowd, some with their shawls and vandykes torn off, others with their bonnets crushed, and all with their fashionable shoulder balloons well flattened. For myself, being naturally weak at the chest, I began to fear dangerous consequences from the compression, as I found my breath nearly suspended, and my breast wedged up as in a vice, the screws of which were gradually turned closer and closer. I found, however, by a little management, I could turn myself so as to take the pressure *laterally*, and thus relieve my chest. With this precaution I succeeded in gradually working my way up very near the table, where for two very tedious hours, so long at least the time seemed to me, I had the gratification of seeing—what? Why, of seeing those symbolical apostles eat their sweetmeats and drink their wine, while the pope served them in person. His holiness, however, did not see the end of the meal; he only moved round the table a few times, being himself waited upon by prelates, who took the dishes, and, kneeling, handed them

to the pope, and he passed them to the guests. After giving them something to eat, he gave them drink, blessed them, and retired. They seemed, however, determined, whether served by popes, prelates, or servants, to finish their meal, which they did at good length, and apparently with a good zest. At the close they took the remainder of the refreshments in sacks, and their serviettes, all of which, it seems, were their perquisites, and retired—not, however, without having first distributed some of their consecrated flowers to their friends and others, a few of which, as a stranger, I solicited and obtained. They were given with that usual courtesy, which the Italians, to their credit be it spoken, generally show to strangers.

The remaining exercises of the day were the repetition of the “Tenebrae” and “Miserere,” the latter by Bai, and a ceremony called “the washing of the altar,” which is done by pouring wine and water upon it, and rubbing it with brushes, and wiping it with sponges and towels—all of which is to represent the blood and water which flowed from the Saviour’s side, and the bloody sweat with which he was bathed in the garden. Of this ceremony, however, I cannot speak from personal observation, as I was too much fatigued with the preceding ceremonies to be able to attend the concluding observances of the day.

GOOD FRIDAY.

Some of our friends attended on the functions of the pope on this day, but, as I was informed nothing very different was to be transacted from the ceremonies of the preceding day, I did not attend at the Sistine chapel. I learn, however, from their report,—and this also agrees with Bishop England’s account of the day—that the principal ceremony consisted in the pope’s going with all his ecclesiastical court and prelates to bring back from the Pauline chapel the body of Christ, that had been deposited there the day before. A procession was formed as before, the host was taken from the tomb, and given to the pope, who carried it covered with a veil, himself walking under a canopy, back again to the Capella Sistina. Now is performed what is called the mass of the *pre-sanctified*, so called because the wafer was consecrated before. It might have been remarked, however, that previous to this procession, his holiness goes through the ceremony of worshipping the cross. This ceremony is in the Sistine chapel. The cross is presented, before which the pope kneels repeatedly; he then has his shoes and his mitre taken off. He then goes to the cross, bows before it with the profoundest reverence, kisses it, &c., after which the attendant knight threw into a silver basin a red purse of damask silk trimmed with gold, which contained the pope’s offering for the occasion; for on Good Friday all the devotees throw in their offering, more or less, into a basin placed to receive it. It seems, indeed, to be a general collecting day. We visited numerous churches, and found in each a crucifix, generally with the image of the Saviour upon it, and placed in such a position as to be accessible by all. To this cross a crowd of worshippers of men, women, and children were constantly pressing, bowing before it, and kissing the image. The more common course was to kiss the five wounds on the feet, hands, and side, and sometimes the temples, and as they withdrew,

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for they were continually coming and going, they threw into the basin, which was always placed under the cross, a piece of money. The most solemn ceremony, however, which we witnessed on this day, was at the Jesuits' church. It was called the "Three hours of Agony." Here a great multitude were assembled, and attending alternately to reading and extempore addressing. The reading was a kind of service which seemed to be specially prepared for the occasion, descriptive of the Saviour's sufferings. As the officiating priest read, he was occasionally interrupted, perhaps in the middle of a paragraph, by the extempore orator or preacher, who rose up, as it would seem, at some thought which struck him at the time, and gave an impassioned address on some point connected with the service and with the solemn reminiscences of the day. The audience appeared solemn—some of them affected; and the whole ceremony was impressive.

SATURDAY BEFORE EASTER.

On this day, at the Basilisk of St. Peter, were a number of unimportant functions, the principal of which were the extinguishing of all the old lights, and the striking of new fire from a flint to rekindle them, to represent the resurrection.* Then followed the blessing of the paschal candle. The paschal candle is very large; sometimes, I should judge, three inches in diameter, and has somewhere about the centre certain knobs or protuberances so arranged as to be an imperfect representation of the cross. One of these candles, of greater or less dimensions, according to the character of the church, was found in almost every church and chapel we visited.

But the most interesting ceremonies of the day were at the church of St. John of Lateran. The first was a baptism of such Jews as had been converted to Christianity. We arrived just at the conclusion of this ordinance, which, however, was of less interest on the account of the fewness of the converts—only two or three, I believe, presented themselves for this Christian ordinance. The disciples of Moses at Rome seem very obstinate in their rejection both of the Messiah and of his assumed successor and vicegerent, judging, perhaps, that the Messiah has no more claim upon their faith than his supposed representative. Few, however, as was the number of converts, we found, on going into the church, that the *agents of conversion* were being multiplied abundantly. The ordination service was a splendid function, on account of the splendor and variety and changes of the vestments, the pomp of the ceremonies, and the number of the candidates.

After some delay on the part of one of the sacristans, who promised to admit us into a temporary gallery which had been erected for spectators, and which delay seemed to be for the purpose of getting a higher fee, we at length obtained a position which gave us a near and a distinct view of all the performances. The service was led by a bishop of middle age and fine personal appearance, with a countenance that expressed more of heaven than of earth. His mitre was splendid, his robes rich and gorgeous, and his whole manner devout. The candidates, nearly if not quite one hundred

* The flints used for this purpose at Florence are said to have been brought from the Holy Land, which gives, of course, a greater sacredness to the fire.

in number, all clad in their peculiar vestments, according to their standing and destination, on entering the choir threw themselves upon their faces in solemn and devout prostration. All of them had their heads shaved, *for they had a vow*. Some only had a small spot shaved upon the crown; but the greater part had both the top and the lower part shaven, leaving only a ring, or belt of hair, passing round the centre of the head. They were ordained in four or five classes, according to their different grades. The ceremony consisted in prayers and music, in a multitude of incensings, genuflections, prostrations, manipulations, and benedictions. The bishop's vestments were changed, his mitre was taken off and put on; so also were his gloves and his ring. He clipped a lock of hair from the candidates, bound their hands with a napkin, caused them to be *divested* and *in-vested* in a variety of changes, and by a variety of garments, and performed upon them and to them many other rites too numerous to mention, in all which he was assisted by numerous bishops and other ecclesiastical functionaries who took their part in the service.

Like most other Catholic observances, however, the thing was quite overdone, both as to the number of the rites and also the length of the entire service. All parties, both spectators and actors, seemed heartily weary of the scene, and a great portion of the former had withdrawn long before the ceremonies closed. The bishop himself, who appeared to be a feeble man, seemed quite exhausted; and yawning and snuff-taking round the ecclesiastical benches showed that much form and ceremony was a weariness to the flesh. After the conclusion of the service we recreated our minds a little by taking another view of this splendid Basilisk church, and then returned to our lodgings.

EASTER SUNDAY.

This is the great day of the feast, being one of three days during the year in which his holiness himself celebrates high mass. The other two instances are Christmas and the festival of St. Peter and St. Paul. We were at our places before the hour, in order to obtain good positions to witness the ceremony; for, in general, a Catholic church is of all places the worst for seeing and hearing. The functions are generally performed but a little above the dead level of the floor of the church, and there are for the most part neither galleries nor seats. Some temporary galleries, however, had on this occasion been thrown up, into which our ladies had the good fortune to find access; and I took a position directly at the side of the gate into the altar; where, not without some difficulty, I was permitted to stand, and sometimes to sit in a free and close view of the ceremony, and directly in the way where all the vestments and sacred elements and vessels were carried past by the sacristan, who was constantly passing and repassing in the performance of his part of the service.

The procession formed in the *Sala Regia*, or Royal Saloon, passed down the royal staircase, and through the porch of the church into the front door, where the chapter, ranged in two lines, and the military guards awaited its entrance. The pope came in state, borne in his pontifical chair upon the shoulders of his twelve

"supporters," and canopied, as on Palm Sunday, by a splendid screen, elevated upon long poles, and carried over his head by eight referendaries. As he entered the church the choir chanted, "*Tu es Petrus, et super hanc petram ædificabo ecclesiam meam*,"—"Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church," &c. As he passed up he stopped at the chapel of the Holy Sacrament, to descend and worship the sacred host. The stool where he knelt, like the chair from which he had descended, was covered with crimson velvet and gold. He reascended the chair, and was borne to his throne, where he was seated to receive the homage of the cardinals and prelates, before the worship of the *great God above* was allowed to commence;—but, as this man-worship was similar to that explained already, I need not repeat it here. The pontifical prince wore upon his head the tiara or triple crown. This is a crown with three cinctures or coronets, to represent the *pontifical*, *imperial*, and *kingly* offices united. This crown, it is said, had at first a single cincture, and it was thus worn in the time of Constantine. In about 1300, Boniface VIII. added another, and in about 1360, Urban V. completed this triune emblem of all civil and ecclesiastical power, by giving it the form of the present tiara. The large splendid *fabelli* of peacock's feathers waved before him, together with a large golden cross called the *vexillum*.

The pontiff had to pass through the operation of robing preparatory to the celebration of mass; and, in addition to the robes worn by other bishops already alluded to, he had a striped silk scarf-like cincture over his shoulders, called a *fanon*, a sort of manipule hanging on the left side, and called a *succinctorium*, and a band round the neck, hanging down in pendants before and behind. This is made of wool shorn of lambs blessed on St. Agnes' day, and after it is fabricated, it is again blessed by the pope at the festival of St. Peter and St. Paul. With this double blessing it becomes a badge of great sanctity and honor.

Having been vested, the pope entered upon the solemnities of his official function for the day. He was attended by the thurifer, or incense-bearer, the cross-bearer, four accalyths or light-bearers, deacons, patriarchs, archbishops, bishops, priests, &c. Three cardinal priests approached him, and, after bowing profoundly, embraced him, to represent the homage of the three wise men to the Saviour. The mass was then celebrated. The form being essentially the same as already described, I will not repeat it. His holiness certainly performed the service with a great deal of solemnity, and just at the moment when the transmutation was about to take place, when the inert wafer was to become a god, before which, *or whom*, the whole multitude were to fall prostrate, he gazed at it with an intensity which seemed to indicate his full belief in the fable of transubstantiation. The language of every feature was

"A god, a god, appears"

and as he elevated the host at the given signal—I was very near him, and think I could not be mistaken—as he elevated it for the adoration of the multitude, tears gushed into his eyes, and he seemed to be melted down before the imaginary god of his own creation.

Indeed all that I saw of Gregory XVI. led me to think favorably of his sincerity and piety. Respect for a venerable old man, as well as a tender regard for the feelings of the worshippers near me, would have induced me, if principle had not been involved in it, to have bowed with the thousands that were prostrate around me. But believing, as I verily did, that that same piece of wafer was *only a wafer still*, a voice from Sinai thundered in my ears, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me." One circumstance in the celebration shows that, after all, Catholics themselves do not believe in the reality of the change of the elements into the actual body and blood of Christ. Before the elements of consecration were received by the pontiff, the sacristan, in order to guard against poison, ate two of three particles, which were brought forward for the mass, and drank some of the wine. It is hardly supposable that, at the present day, the pope fears being poisoned, but there was a time when such fears were entertained, and hence originated the custom, which is now kept up merely as an established usage. But this shows that, when there was danger of poison, even popes were afraid to trust to transubstantiation to change the poisoned wafer into the real body of Christ. What! the body of Christ—poisonous and producing death! Christ says, "My flesh is meat, indeed, and my blood is drink indeed."—"I am the bread of life." But Catholics either believe that Christ's body and blood may be poison indeed, and the bread of death,—or they do not believe that a poisoned wafer is by the celebration of the mass changed into the real body of Christ. Whichever alternative they take proves fatal to their system.

And here let me say that the courtesy of the Romans far exceeds that of some blustering Catholics of our own country, who have assumed to themselves the liberty of knocking off hats, if not of knocking down those who do not choose to conform to what is verily believed to be their superstition. The military behaved on this occasion with great propriety. I was specially struck with the pontiff's noble guard. They are a volunteer corps, who tender their services gratuitously to their sovereign pontiff, and are made up from the noble families of Rome. They were well dressed, and as fine looking men as I ever saw in the ranks of a military company. This guard were all around me, and although they could but see that I was a decided non-conformist in the ceremonies of the occasion, they let all pass without censure or apparent notice.

The pope, together with the deacon, and sub-deacon, communicated on this occasion, the two latter, which is not practised on other occasions, taking the wine as well as the wafer, and taking it too in a peculiar way, by sucking it through a pipe or tube, his holiness also drinking in the same way.

After mass the pope returned in state, as he came, stopping, however, at a kneeling stool by the way to venerate

The Holy Relics.

As you face the high altar of St. Peter's, you see on the left a shrine consecrated to a damsel called St. Veronica. Here is a statue of the saint, and high above it is a balcony, where, on great occasions, three most sacred, and, if we may believe the reports of

several special courts that have been appointed to examine into their history,—most veritable relics are exhibited. They are, 1. A part of the lance with which the Saviour's side was pierced. 2. Parts of the true cross, and, 3. A napkin, or handkerchief, on which the Saviour wiped his face, covered as it was with blood and sweat, as he was going up Calvary. The outlines of his visage were thus miraculously left upon the napkin, which continue unto this day. With respect to the authenticity of these relics, every one, of course, must judge for himself. Even Catholics do not *require* a belief in them as essential matters of faith. The same sub-deacon that whispered in my ear at the time of the controversy with the Spanish general of the Franciscans on Palm Sunday, stood by me on Easter Sunday, as I, with thousands of others, stood gazing at these relics; and, perceiving, as I suppose, by my remarks and looks, that I was somewhat incredulous, observed, "These are not articles of faith—a man may believe them or not, and in either case be a good Catholic." With respect to the handkerchief, it appears that its identity and history can be traced as far back as the year 707, at which period it was an object of veneration. What its former history was, I believe even Catholics cannot definitely trace. Tradition says, however, that this St. Veronica was one of those daughters of Zion who accompanied their Lord and Master to the scene of his tragedy, and that, being near him as he was sweating under his cross, she kindly wiped his face, or permitted him to wipe it on her handkerchief—and the miracle followed. It was taken back with the bloody portrait indelibly impressed upon it. It was, of course, preserved as an object of attention and veneration, and where else should it be preserved but at the great capital of the Christian world? With respect to the cross, the history is, that it was found at Jerusalem by St. Helena, the mother of Constantine. She placed the larger portion of it in a case at Jerusalem, but sent some pieces to Rome. The portion left at Jerusalem was carried away by Chosroas, king of Persia, in his war with Phocas in the year 624. It was afterward retaken and brought back to Jerusalem, and carried thence to Constantinople; and during the crusades portions of it were brought to the west of Europe, at different times and by different persons, insomuch that it has been sarcastically said that there were pieces of wood in different places of Catholic countries, which are called parts of the true cross, sufficient to build a 74. This is doubtless hyperbolic; but that there are and have been many cords of such wood, there can be no doubt. We were shown at the church of the Holy Cross in Jerusalem, situated near the palace of the Lateran in Rome, that portion which was brought or sent to Rome by St. Helena. One of the pieces now exhibited, for I believe there are two of them, is from the portion first sent over by the empress, and the other probably is from Constantinople. They are enshrined, as are also the other relics, in a rich silver case with rock crystal and precious stones. The lance is also said to have been found at Jerusalem by the mother of Constantine, and this was carried to Constantinople in the sixth century, and was there, as the accounts say, divided. The point was pledged to the Venetians in the 13th century, in pawn for the payment of money borrowed, and the shank was kept still at Constantinople. St. Louis of France

redeemed the pledge, and took the relic to France. The part kept at Constantinople was sent to Rome by a special embassy in 1492. At Ancona two bishops met the ambassador and received the relic, at Narni two cardinals met the bishops and received it from them, and at the Flaminian gate of Rome the pope himself received the relic, and carried it in solemn procession to the Vatican. So much for the history of these sacred remains, and I have dwelt the longer on this, that the reader might know something of the ground on which so many sacred relics in Rome are authenticated. These relics are supposed to be the most unquestionable of any. What credit then is to be given to others, each must judge for himself. Where were these relics when Jerusalem was ploughed as a field? They are now kept in a chapel made on purpose to receive them, and are allowed to be approached by none but the canons of the Church.* The height and distance from which we were permitted to view them, as they were successively exhibited in their crystal cases from the high balcony, made the view very indistinct. We could discern, however, the outlines of a human face faintly imprinted upon the handkerchief. The pope knelt to witness the exhibition, and to venerate these sacred relics; and the vast multitudes that thronged St. Peter's fell also upon their knees. And there they were, in one devout mass, gazing with up-turned eyes, and with the same apparent intensity and adoration, until the relics disappeared, as that with which the disciples gazed upon their ascending Lord, until "a cloud received him out of their sight."

The pope reascended the chair, and was borne out of the church, to appear once more at the front gallery to bless the people. This benediction was more splendid than that on Maundy Thursday, inasmuch as the crowd was greater, and there was a greater display of the military. Even the horses, it is said, were made to kneel at the spreading out of the papal hands. The pope prayed, and although he was too high and distant to be heard, yet the form is written, as is every part of the Catholic service, and from this form we learn that the pope "asks, through the prayers and merits of the blessed Mary ever virgin, of the blessed John the Baptist, of the blessed apostles, Peter and Paul, and all the saints, that the Almighty God may have mercy upon them, and that all their sins being forgiven, Jesus Christ would bring them to eternal life. Amen." A truly Catholic prayer: sins are to be forgiven through the merits of the saints!! The blessing was then pronounced, and plenary indulgence imparted to penitents, which, on printed notices, is thrown down among the people—all of whom seemed eager to catch them. Once more the bells rang, and the cannons of St. Angelo thundered, and the multitudes, which were variously estimated at from thirty to eighty thousand, moved off and were dispersed to the four winds.

W. FISK.

* Don Miguel, the ex-king of Portugal, has obtained the favor of the pope of being made honorary canon of St. Peter's, for the purpose of being permitted to examine these relics.

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FAMILY WORSHIP.

The general assembly's Pastoral Letter to the people of Scotland on Family Worship.

Edinburgh, May 30, 1836. Sess. ult.

THE General Assembly, having considered and approved the overtures recommending a renewed admonition, for the purpose of stirring up the people of this land to the faithful and regular observance of the worship of God in their families, did, and hereby do, require the following pastoral letter to be read by all the Ministers of this Church from their several pulpits on the first convenient Lord's day after it shall come into their hands.

JOHN LEE, Cl. Eccl. Scot.

The General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, to our dearly beloved people: grace, mercy, and peace, from God the Father, and Christ Jesus our Lord.

On your behalf, brethren, we thank God, whom we serve with our spirit in the Gospel of his Son, that your faith and devotion have long been spoken of throughout the world: and we are bound always to have remembrance of you in our prayers night and day, greatly desiring that, like your forefathers in times of clearest light, you may continue steadfastly in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost, abounding in the exercises of that unfeigned godliness which is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.

In compliance with the solicitations of many who watch for your souls, and are jealous over you with godly jealousy, we have resolved to issue this brotherly exhortation on the sacred and indispensable duty of family worship,—not as if we had any recent ground for apprehending that it is likely to fall into more extensive neglect, but because we know too well that it is by no means universally practised, and because even the purest minds require to be stirred up by way of remembrance, that, while they hold fast the profession of their own faith without wavering, they may consider one another, to provoke and encourage, by good counsel and good example, to the love of truth and holiness, and to the habitual and serious observance of those offices of piety, whereby, as surely as the body is nourished and refreshed by its daily bread and its nightly rest, the soul of man, through the nurture and admonition of the Lord, is progressively matured in excellence and strength, till it is advanced to the perfection and glory of its immortal existence.

In calling your attention to this momentous topic, we think it superfluous to enlarge on the high obligations by which the duty is enforced—obligations which are involved in the very constitution of

our frail and dependent being, and impressed on the understanding and the heart, by the persuasive voice of scriptural authority, opening the ears of men, and sealing the instruction, by which God speaketh, not once or twice, but at sundry times, and in divers manners, adding line upon line, precept upon precept, promise upon promise, and threatening upon threatening, so as to bring perpetually to remembrance both the blessings which are multiplied to them that fear the Lord, and the fury which is poured out on the families which call not on his name. The appointment of the reasonable service of bowing down at the domestic altar before the Lord our Maker, that, in waiting for the promised effusion of the Spirit of grace and supplications, we may be filled with the fruits of righteousness, has ever been regarded by all men of sound mind and Christian experience, not as the imposition of an irksome yoke, but as the conveyance of an inestimable privilege; for as often as we mark the tokens of God's power and presence in making the outgoings of the morning and evening to rejoice, must every enlightened and purified heart, lifting up its affections to the Father of spirits, acknowledge with triumphant satisfaction, that it is "a good thing to show forth his loving-kindness in the morning, and his faithfulness every night."

To those only who have tasted and seen it, can we speak intelligibly of the tranquil delight which is awakened and sustained by such periodical acts of household worship, as are not a mere formal ceremony in which the members join with reluctance or cold compliance, but the fervent utterance of lips which, out of the abundance of the heart in which the love of God is shed abroad, are, by the influence of that unquenchable affection, most pleasingly constrained to celebrate the mercies which are new every morning, and to offer up the spiritual incense of prayer with as unceasing regularity as from the sanctuary of Israel the smoke of the evening sacrifice arose, or as the early dew of Hermon descended on the mountains of Sion, when there the Lord commanded the blessing, even life for evermore.

Without all controversy, the benefits produced by this hallowed exercise are ineffably precious. It is not enough to say that thus are devout and grateful emotions awakened;—thus is faith in the superintending providence and holy promises of God confirmed;—thus are the graces of humility, resignation, and patience nourished and increased;—while with the contemplation of the infinite excellence, the unwearied beneficence, and the everlasting strength of the Lord Jehovah, we contrast the instability, deceitfulness, and desperate wickedness of the heart of man. By the infallible testimony of Heaven, we are authorized to affirm constantly that there is an efficacy in the prayer of faith, which, though inexplicable by our feeble understandings, must, through all ages, continue to avail as much as it did in the days of those patriarchs, prophets, and righteous men, who as princes had power with God, when, receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, they had grace to serve him acceptably with reverence and godly fear. "The Lord is ever nigh unto them that are of a broken heart, and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit," when, taking with them the words which inspired

wisdom has taught them to utter, they lift up their desires at his footstool, not seeking great things for themselves, or panting after the dust of the earth, or sighing for the vain delights of the sons of men, but thirsting and longing for the blessedness of the man whose transgression is forgiven, and who, being justified by faith, has peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. We have no encouragement to hope that, by taking thought for temporal satisfactions, we shall find grace in the sight of the Lord; but if we aspire after the best gifts, which are the heritage of the faithful, seeking first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, we believe and are sure that his Divine power will give us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him that hath called us to glory and virtue. Though our Father in the heavens knoweth what things we have need of before we ask them, and though the purposes of his everlasting kindness are often fulfilled more substantially by withholding than by granting the desires which we naturally cherish, it is only to them who worship him in spirit and in truth, that he has promised to do exceeding abundantly above all that they ask or think; and we have no more solid ground to expect that we shall receive without asking, or that we shall find without seeking, than the husbandman has to look for an abundant harvest springing up in the fields which he has neither planted nor watered, or than the merchant has to calculate on receiving his own with usury, for the talent which has been tied up in a napkin or buried in the earth.

It is not for us to unfold the laws of the spiritual world, or to demonstrate why and how it is that the communications of heavenly influence and favor are in any degree suspended on the frequency and fervency of our supplications. But this we know, that, as in old time, the father of the faithful commanded his children, and his household after him, to unite with him in the exercises of a holy life, that the Lord might bring upon Abraham that which he had spoken of him,—even so, in all generations, may the willing and obedient hope that, while seeking unto God, and committing their cause to Him who doeth great things and unsearchable, they place their confidence not in their own importunity or their own efforts, but in the exalted merit and prevalent intercession of the Mediator of the new covenant, they cannot fail to be made partakers of that abundant grace which ought to be the chief object of all our prayers, and which is never denied to the humble. We know, assuredly, that our heavenly Father giveth his Holy Spirit to them who ask him; and if, for the sake of his beloved Son, he is pleased to bestow this unspeakable gift in answer to the prayer of the believing soul, why should we hesitate to admit that it is of the Lord's mercies that, by the eternal ordination of Divine wisdom, prayer has been rendered one of the sure and sufficient means of transmitting to the faithful every other good and perfect gift which cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variability, neither shadow of turning?

To the duties of social prayer and thanksgiving, accompanied with that instruction in righteousness which the reading of the Scriptures is calculated to impart, let the benefits thus conferred on your

several domestic circles operate as a strong incitement. It is not, indeed, within the compass of human ability to infuse grace into the souls which are most tenderly beloved. But great will probably be the influence of a pious example on those who confide in your affection, and have cause to revere your worth. If your children and dependants perceive, that, while you are not slothful in the business of time, you are also fervent in spirit, serving the Lord; and that, while you provide for your own the food and the raiment which are obtained by the blessing of God on the hand of the diligent, you ask for them that bread of heaven which strengtheneth the heart; may you not hope that they will be stirred up both to pray and to labor for the meat which endureth to life everlasting, and that they will learn to regard the favor of God as a better portion than the abundance of corn and wine? May you not hope that, while your own minds are elevated by contemplating the works of creation, providence, and redemption, and by reflecting on the dignified and endearing relation to which you have been raised in having "received the Spirit of adoption whereby you cry, Abba, Father," they who look up to you for guidance and protection will take pleasure in approaching to God, and through the experience of the peace of walking with the wise, will be taught to abhor the enticements of sinners, and to hold fast that which is good? And even in the case of those who, through perversity of heart, and the snares of an evil world, have forsaken the path of integrity and truth, may it not be hoped that the wise counsels which they have for a season forgotten, and the devotional habits which they have long failed to imitate, will, like the bread cast upon the waters, be found after many days? Small must have been your experience of the discipline of Providence, if you have never known so much as one who had wandered so far from the way of peace as to disappoint the earnest expectations of his father, and to turn the joy of her who bare him into bitterness, but who, after his own wickedness had corrected him, and his backslidings reproved him, has been awakened to new obedience, by recalling to his agonized mind with reverential awe the solemn image of the parental guide, in whose quiet habitation the daily exercises of prayer and praise hallowed every pursuit, lightened every care, soothed every sorrow, and seasoned every enjoyment, so as to render the voice of rejoicing and salvation in the tabernacles of the righteous a lively type of the blessed conversation of heaven, and a delicious foretaste of the fellowship of the saints in light.

If ye know these things by your own experience, or by the incontrovertible testimony of them who have tasted that the Lord is gracious, happy are ye if ye do them. Nor can you have peace and safety if, knowing what is good, you leave it undone.

And while you present your supplications for yourselves and your families, forget not the eternal concerns of the families which call not on the name of God. If it be, as it ought to be, your heart's desire that they may be brought to the obedience of the Gospel, brethren, pray for us, and for all the ministers of the truth, "that the word of the Lord may have free course and be glorified, even as it is with you." Such an intercession as this will assuredly

prove efficacious toward the enlargement of the household of faith, if all of you, both small and great, not only in the congregations of the upright, who, in heaviness of heart, sigh for the abounding of iniquity and the failing of truth, but in your families apart, and in your unseen retirements, prostrate yourselves at the footstool of your Father in heaven, who seeth in secret, and pour out your desires before him in that effectual fervent importunity which, like the long and patient waiting of the husbandman for the precious fruit of the earth, will, according to the sure word of promise, issue in plenteous showers of blessings, not confined to any favored spot, or any privileged community, but dropping down fertility far and wide over fields coextensive with the inhabited world, filled as it shall be in that evening time of light with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea; and thus the God of the whole earth, in remembrance of his holy covenant, and in fulfilment of the good pleasure of his goodness, will arise and have mercy not only on the mountain of holiness in which he had his dwelling in time past, but on all in every place who call on the name of Jesus Christ our Lord; so that, while he clothes his priests with salvation, and makes his people shout for joy, the ways of Zion which have mourned, because few came to the solemn feasts, shall be thronged with the multitudes who keep the holy day with thanksgiving in their hearts, and the high praises of God in their mouths,—wisdom and knowledge shall be the stability of those times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord, when his work shall appear before the face of his servants, and his glory to their children; and they that fear the Lord, being all replenished with the riches of grace, shall take that sweet counsel together which revives the inward part, and knits the brotherhood of Christians in the unity of the faith and the holy bond of perfectness. “Then shall the offering of his people be pleasant unto the Lord as in the days of old, and as in former years.” “And the Lord will create upon every dwelling place of Mount Zion, and upon her assemblies, a cloud and smoke by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night; for upon all the glory shall be a defence.”

The above circular we recommend to the prayerful attention of all our readers. The subject of which it treats is one of vital interest to professing Christians; but, it is to be feared, too much neglected by many of them. We deem family worship to be instituted by the same authority and on the same principles as public worship, and enforced by the same sanctions. The principal difference between them appears to be that the one is to be performed daily, and the other weekly—the former by the constituted head of the family, the latter by the authorized minister of the Church. Now, what should we say of a body of Christians professedly in Church fellowship with each other, without any public worship? Such a course of conduct, anomalous as it might appear, would be analogous to that of too many professors of religion with regard to family worship. The doctrines laid down in the circular, and enforced with a perspicuity and strength of reasoning for which the Scottish divines are so eminent, are adapted to all Christians in all countries, and are perhaps as much needed in ours and other American Churches as in the venerable Kirk whence they emanated.—Eds.



*Rev. Charles Giles.
of the Oneida Conference.*

